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A QUARTERLY JEWISH REVIEW

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- ABBA ~~RECEIVED~~ Sinai and Suez—A Retrospect
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- EMANUEL LITVINOFF Say Nothing of the Dead

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SAMUEL MENASHE • HARVEY SHAPIRO • DAVID GALLER
HARRY ROSKOLENKO • JON SILKIN

Books and Authors:

HANS MEYERHOFF • JOEL CARMICHAEL • SHLOMO KATZ
HAROLD ROSENBERG • PAUL GOODMAN

From the Four Corners:

DAVID ZASLAVSKY • HAYIM GREENBERG • MARION MAGID

PUBLISHED BY THE THEODOR HERZL FOUNDATION, INC.

Statement of Purpose

THE THEODOR HERZL FOUNDATION has been established as an educational agency to promote the study and discussion of problems confronting Jews in the world today. Two overwhelming changes in the context of our Jewish existence—on the one hand, the destruction of one-third of world Jewry, which has erased many political and cultural landmarks, and on the other, the rise of the State of Israel, which has opened broad new horizons—call for a reexamination of basic concepts and the ways to Jewish fulfillment. Equally grave and equally difficult to answer in traditional terms, are the fateful questions that face a world aghast at the threat of its own annihilation. It is against this background that MIDSTREAM, A Quarterly Jewish Review, has been conceived.

In sponsoring MIDSTREAM, a Zionist publication, we are committed, above all, to free inquiry. We conceive Zionism as, in essence, a questioning of the Jewish *status quo*, and as a steady confrontation of the problems of Jewish existence. It is our hope that MIDSTREAM will offer critical interpretation of the past, a searching examination of the present, and afford a medium for considered and independent opinion and for creative cultural expression.

MIDSTREAM is not an official organ, nor do the publishers and editors necessarily identify themselves with views expressed in its pages. It is, rather, our purpose to enable a wide range of thought to appear in the columns of this magazine.

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A Quarterly Jewish Review

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from the four corners

I. The Diplomat from Lilienblum Street

By DAVID ZASLAVSKY

(Late in September the government of Israel lodged a complaint with the government of the Soviet Union that one of its diplomatic attachés had been held incommunicado by the Soviet Secret Police for several hours and that he had been threatened with dire consequences unless he undertook espionage activities for the Soviet government. This diplomatic official, Mr. Eliahu Chazan, returned to Israel as soon as he was released. For some days after the Israel protest, the Soviet government maintained silence. Then the Soviet Union counter-charged that Mr. Chazan had been merely questioned briefly after he was caught distributing anti-Soviet propaganda. On September 22 there appeared in Pravda an article by D. Zaslavsky, one of that paper's chief editorial writers, on the subject of Mr. Chazan's arrest. We offer the article from Pravda in full as a sample of Soviet journalism. The typically Stalinist "charm" of its tone and wording, also shed light on Soviet mentality as well as on Soviet policy in the Middle East.)

LILIENBLUM STREET is in Tel Aviv, the chief city of the State of Israel. But this is not simply a street. This is a popular nickname for a special little world that is extremely unattractive. Here breed the greedy fauna of the black market, illegal deals in foreign currency, the marketing of contraband goods, trade in narcotics—such is the economics of this type of street that

flourishes in the "free air" of private capitalist initiative.

This, indeed, may be in order for a capitalist government. But it is difficult not to regret that the ruling circles of Israel display lack of discrimination and at times attract to diplomatic service in socialist countries, persons who received their education in Lilienblum Street. Such persons confuse diplomacy with profiteering. They introduce into their work the customs, habits and tastes of the black market. And, naturally, such an unworthy game that is incompatible with elementary requirements of diplomacy compromises first of all these "diplomats" themselves. It inevitably leads them to scandalous blunders.

Two years ago, members of the Israel Embassy in the U.S.S.R., Messrs. Lebanon, Kehat, and Sela, were compelled hastily to leave the Soviet Union. They were guilty of conduct incompatible with the diplomatic calling. They were undoubtedly quite disappointed. Had it happened in a capitalist country they would not have been interfered with in their profiteering and shady deals. There a black market does exist. There exist kindred profiteering souls. But in the Soviet Union there turned out to be neither such a market nor such souls.

Here was an opportunity for someone to figure out what had happened and to draw the necessary conclusions. They received an object lesson.

Alas, the marketplace passions of people who have gone through the school of Lilienblum Street are uncontrollable! Recently Mr. Chazan, an attaché of the Israel Embassy in the U.S.S.R., shamefully blundered in Odessa. Mr. Chazan lost all sense of reality. While carrying out the will of

his rich protectors in certain countries, he tried to gain the confidence of Soviet citizens. He tried to distribute anti-Soviet literature, he constantly tested whether someone would not be tempted by a dollar . . . and naturally he failed in a most scandalous fashion, got stuck himself, and also misled his diplomatic superiors.

Mr. Chazan was caught red-handed. His situation was pitiful and laughable. The Israel Embassy was at once informed of his unseemly doings.

What remained to do for this spy who had blundered? In his situation, the wisest thing would have been to keep quiet, silently to gulp down the cup of his shame, and to run from the country in which there is no freedom for profiteering. But the diplomat from Lilienblum Street is true to himself even in shame. He decided to "speculate" in it too. People of his profession are loud-mouthed and insolent. They know the rule of thieves: to cry, "Catch the thief!" when threatened with being apprehended. But it is remarkable that he tried to cover up his failure with a hysterical outcry. In the style of American comic strips, he composed a clumsy story of how an attempt was made to deprive him of diplomatic immunity, how someone tried to "buy" this incorruptible victim, and similar nonsense.

This was not wise but also not surprising. People who have a price value everything in the world in terms of pennies.

What is surprising is that the antics of Mr. Chazan found support in the Israel Embassy. But this too is not hard to understand.

Apparently the ruling circles of Israel consider that the problem consists not in softening but in sharpening international relations in general and sharpening relations between the nations of the East in particular. They do not like the fact that the prestige of the Soviet peace-loving policies in the Near and Middle East is growing. What can they do but try to poison the political at-

mosphere? The Messrs. Chazan carry out their assigned task when they seek to arouse in Israel hostile feelings toward the Soviet people.

For this purpose it was necessary to translate Chazan's vulgar fables into diplomatic ambassadorial language. The Embassy reproduced Chazan's fantastic tale in an official diplomatic document. But fiction does not become more convincing when it is repeated. It is quite clear that Chazan, the blunderer, somehow had to justify his failure, and it is difficult to demand an artistic story from a marketplace speculator. Mr. Chazan simply lied. And the reactionary Israel press, following the Embassy, found it desirable to publish this falsehood as an authentic story.

Well, let them console themselves in their failure as well as they can. As the well-known Eastern proverb states: The dogs bark and the caravan goes on. The diplomats of Israel now have another opportunity to convince themselves that their Embassy in Israel is not on Lilienblum Street.

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II. Who is David Zaslavsky?

By HAYIM GREENBERG

(Who is David Zaslavsky, the author of the foregoing gem of Stalinist journalism? Mr. Zaslavsky for many years has been a prominent journalist on the staff of the Moscow Pravda. But his devotion to Bolshevik-style journalism is something acquired, not native to him. In fact, there are people who remember Zaslavsky in a previous "incarnation," when elements of decency and honesty were still not entirely alien to him. The late Labor Zionist leader, Hayim Greenberg, from whose article on Zaslavsky, written in 1945, the following excerpt is taken, knew him during the period after the Bolshevik seizure of power.)

IN 1920, I occasionally used to meet David Zaslavsky "on neutral territory" in Kiev. This neutral corner consisted of the Religious-Philosophical Society—a small institution without its own meeting-hall, which sought and found haven in the meeting-places of other institutions and in still-unrequisioned private homes.

It is strange now to think back to this Society. I wonder—why did the authorities tolerate it? Did they not understand that at the meetings of this Society, which were attended by persons belonging to various, including political, trends, many heresies were bound to be voiced? This Society was not registered anywhere. According to law its meetings could have been dispersed and its members arrested and brought before the revolutionary tribunal. The authorities were aware of the existence of this Society but decided to simulate ignorance. They must have thought: This is a bunch of ne'er-do-wells that will certainly not cause any major harm—let them amuse themselves with their philosophical fancies if such is their pleasure. From time to time, a card-

holding Communist, or even some high Soviet official, knowing that he would not be punished if he gratified his intellectual curiosity, blundered into one of the meetings. In time, David Zaslavsky became a frequent, and later a regular, visitor at the Society's readings and symposia.

At that time I did not notice in him any particular interest in specifically Jewish problems. Naturally, he rejected Zionism, and his one-time Bundist autonomism, I sensed, was losing its convincing force. So far as general political problems were concerned, we were both at that time, if you will pardon the expression, counter-revolutionists. But had both of us confessed our sins before a revolutionary tribunal, I would no doubt have received a much lighter punishment, because I only dreamed in terms of an over-simplified utopian notion regarding a change in the regime "from within," with inner forces, through a kind of spontaneous upsurge of liberalism in the people and in the army, while Zaslavsky could easily have conceded that foreign military intervention might not have been such a great wrong. Furthermore, for some time he also had had a weakness for Ukrainian independence, while I (since I am now confessing my sins I may as well admit it) was not ready to make too much of a fuss about the Ukrainian political renaissance. I was quite shocked that Zaslavsky had been for some months—during an interlude when the Red Army had temporarily evacuated most of the Ukraine—a frequent contributor to a Ukrainian newspaper which was known to have been subsidized by Petlura's staff. I do not now recall whether he wrote in Ukrainian or whether his articles were translated from Russian, but people with taste in these matters tremendously enjoyed the style of his articles. I also knew that his collaboration on that newspaper was not motivated by material need, but rather by sympathy for the Ukrainian nationalist movement—

(Continued on page 102)

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A Quarterly Jewish Review

In this essay ABBA EBAN, Israel's Ambassador to the United States and head of the Israel Delegation to the U.N., appraises the outcome and effects of the Sinai and Suez Campaigns of a year ago which were, at the time, sharply criticized in many quarters, but which in retrospect are seen by many critics in an entirely different light. This essay will appear in the next edition of Mr. EBAN's *Voice of Israel*.

Sinai and Suez — A Retrospect

By ABBA EBAN

STILLNESS has brooded over Sinai for most of recorded time. But now and then a spasm of violence shakes the wilderness. The interludes of human strife and habitation leave their mark, not on Sinai itself, but on everything around. With their passing, Sinai sleeps again; but the course of history seldom flows unchanged.

The events of last winter in Sinai are of this history-making dimension. Nowhere in the world could men or nations escape a shock which some deemed salutary and others perilous, but of which none could deny the primary impact. Three nations arose in force and wrath to resist the Nasser tyranny. Their compulsions sprang from different points of emotion and

interest, and none held any purpose in complete identity with another. But they were alike—and not as alone as they often seemed—in regarding Nasser's excesses as an outrage to the rights of nations and to the law and conscience of the world. Nor was the common adversary their only link. These were the three peoples who, two decades before, had been placed by history in the vanguard of resistance to the Hitler assault. The national memory of each had learned, by ordeal of pain, that an aggressive despotism can only be withstood too late—never too early. Because this truth was not more swiftly seized less than a generation ago, the Jewish people had been engulfed in hideous agony, France humiliated and overrun, Britain brought to

its greatest peril since the Napoleonic wars, and the light of goodness all but extinguished forever from the world of men. In the annals of resistance to tyranny these are three peoples of special lineage and experience. But beyond this broad affinity, the merits of their actions in the winter of 1956 must be weighed on separate scales.

LIKE WATER into which a stone is cast the consequences of Sinai continue to ripple outwards in ever widening circles. But even the first results were of universal scale. A dictatorship learned, to its surprise, that the patience of free peoples has its inexorable term. Israel taught that those who lay siege to their neighbor must ultimately count on their victim breaking out, rather than cooperate in his own strangulation. The Soviet Union saw the fated and predictable results of the spectacular rearmament of Egypt. Europe awakened through months of fuel scarcity to seek a better economic future than a life of uneasy breath with Egyptian fingers on its jugular vein. The Commonwealth was torn by the diversity of interests in its midst. The United States arrayed itself against the three nations from which its own spiritual, cultural, linguistic and political legacy was wholly derived; but thoughtful American minds soon began to wonder if the judgments which demanded this strange alignment could be without flaw. The United Nations seemed to have become a forum of vigor and decision. But it became so only because the United States and the Soviet Union were in agreement, and because its recommendations were addressed to democracies, not to dictatorships—to Israel and not to the Arab States. Since it still has no victories in matters disputed by the two greatest powers, and has never been able since 1948 to modify Arab policies

conflicting with the Charter, its successes in the winter of 1956 must, with sorrow, be ruled as episodic, not substantive. Moreover, the international bodies which organized such power and authority to contain the explosion had not shown the same zeal in preventing it. Sinai has caused men everywhere to ask the great questions about the United Nations. The great answers are yet to be found.

ALITERATURE of remorse has sprung up in Europe around the Suez and Sinai expeditions. Some of this writing has the speed and profusion, but also the transience, of a mushroom growth. In Britain the remorse of the writers is for having begun the expedition; in France, for having ended it before its work was done. But the criticism all hinges on the allegedly "abortive," unfinished character of the enterprise. The implication is that it solved and clarified nothing, and that its only fruit was sacrifice and woe.

These retrospects may turn out to have been premature. Separated by several months from the immediate memory, we can already proclaim one thing in full conviction. Whether Sinai is applauded or not, it cannot, with any truth, be described as abortive of results. On the contrary, it emerges as a potent event, dividing the past of the Middle East from its future by a series of sharp and radical transformations. And the critics of the process are often champions of the results. Those who castigated the means cannot forbear to applaud some of the ends.

Foremost amongst these is that the legend of Nasser's military dominance perished in the desert sands. So did the legend of his magnetic appeal to an affectionate Arab world; for in Egypt's peril not one Arab bullet was fired in her defense. On the debris of these shattered myths new alignments arose

in the Middle East, in sharp dissociation from Nasser's hegemony. A balance between Egypt and Israel was restored, not so much physically as in the more crucial sense of qualitative estimate. After Nasser's defeat, Arab regimes which chose to defy him discovered the valor of which discretion is the better part. It is easier to hurl defiance at a neighbor when one is separated by a garden fence as sturdily resistant as Israel had shown itself to be. Within a few months of the Sinai campaign, the Egyptian dictator, presiding over a ruined economy and deserted by half the Arab world, was arresting opponents seeking his destruction and fulminating in Abidin Square against a "conspiracy launched by the United States" for his undoing. He still gloated over Soviet largesse in weapons and his mastery of Europe's supply line. But the once dominant voice now had a desperate ring; and the truculence was that of a man at bay. If this generation is, in Nasser's flamboyant words, "in search of a hero," it is not conscious of having found its quarry on the banks of the Nile. But for the reduction of his prestige at Sinai, the world might now be facing not only a Syria and Egypt estranged from the West, but a unified Arab world under Cairo's hegemony with no single center of avowed Western sympathy.

Those in the West, who take consolation from this readiness of the northern Arab States to strike loose from Nasser's yoke, are, however inadvertently, relishing the fruits of Sinai. They are endorsing a spirit of independence and separatism which would never have risen but for Nasser's defeat and would never have survived if there had been territorial contiguity between Egypt and the northern Arab world. Without the intervening wall of Israel territory, Egypt, with its preponderance of arms and population, would have little diffi-

culty in establishing its dominance over the States of the Levant and the Fertile Crescent. Thus, by a paradox of fortune, Israel's territorial integrity is the surest guarantee for the independence of the northern Arab States. This reflection does little credit to the outworn concepts of "territorial adjustments" which, by bringing the Egyptian frontier into contiguity with Jordan, would have established the Middle East as a domain of Egyptian hegemony rather than as the abode of its separate independent sovereignties.

THE NEW alignment between the countries of the Arab world has been attended by changes of equal scope in the relations between the Middle East and the West. The United States became committed far beyond its previous intention to the preservation of the independence and integrity of all Middle Eastern States. Tens of millions of Americans saw and heard their President pledge his honor to the pursuit of greater tranquility for Israel and her neighbors, and to the mobilization of "firm action by the society of nations" if Israel's legal rights were violated again. The Gulf of Aqaba was proclaimed by the United States and the other maritime nations as an international waterway open to all ships bent on free and innocent passage; and within a few weeks it had seen the first movements of a commerce more varied and promising than in all the years before. The United Nations, under Canadian initiative, developed new symbols and agencies of its authority; and its Emergency Force sealed up two of the danger points in the Egyptian-Israel conflict. Above all, world opinion arose, in a swift transition, to look upon Nasserism with a disillusioned severity, and to surround Israel with a new comprehension of the unique problems and choices which beset her

security. In the shelter of this respite Israel advanced in another spurt of her consolidation.

These, together, are profound changes in the Middle Eastern landscape. They must be compared with the brooding, thunderous air which sat heavily upon our region in October, 1956; and the comparison is a vital part of any historic judgment on the decisions of that crucial month.

But recourse to arms requires a deeper justification than safety of outcome. The issue of conscience depends not on whether Israel was fortunate, but on whether she was right. Here, too, the passing months bring calmer appraisal. Israel has no cause to renounce her claim to vindication in terms of rectitude, as well as of utility.

Never has a nation more embattled than Israel risen up against an assailant more menacing and aggressive than the Nasser regime. The Israel forces were tactically on the offensive—but within the framework of a nation's self-defense. Egyptian forces were tactically on the defensive—but in the context of an essentially aggressive design. Failure to see the truths of aggression and defense in their general and, therefore, their true perspectives explains the confusion which seized the United Nations and its leading powers in October, and the slow contrition which brought the curtain down on a different scene in March.

The issues are whether Nasser deserved to be resisted; and whether those who resisted him were righteous and lawful in their decision.

THE FIRST of these questions finds unity of response even amongst those who differ sharply on the second. The Egyptian regime had been attended at its birth by universal sympathy and good will. It seemed to promise a new vision of Egypt's society, and an

era of moderation in her international relations. But soon after its triumph in securing the evacuation of British forces, the Nasser regime turned aside from the road of labor and social reform towards the allurements of xenophobia and the dream of hegemony. It suppressed all diversity and dissent in order to establish Egypt as a police state of ruthless uniformity. It violated its obligations under the treaties and decisions requiring free passage in the Suez Canal. It fomented strife and rebellion in North Africa. It sent its attachés and agents into all Arab lands from Morocco to Jordan in an effort to subvert them into Egyptian satellites. Its radio transmitters filled the air of Africa and Asia with strident abuse of the democratic world. It repelled efforts to bring about a settlement with Israel. It imported a torrent of Soviet weapons to institute a perilous and explosive race in arms. It converted the Middle East into an arena of rivalry between the great powers, among which it maneuvered and bargained in an overt campaign of extortion. It announced Israel's destruction as the central aim of its national policy. It organized the *Fedayeen* groups for brutal murder and violence on Israel's soil. It concerted a pact with a subservient Jordan and Syria, and dedicated the alliance to Israel's forcible extinction. Wherever its influence spread it actively undermined all progress and filled the Middle East with an anxious air of peril and intimidation.

The comparison with Hitler flatters and exaggerates Nasser's power. But it does not misrepresent his spirit or intention. In the wide scope and frank egotism of his ambition, in his refusal to be inhibited by the interests of other countries or by the restraints of universal law, he entered the lineage of the historic despots who have dreamed of power on a continental scale at the

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expense of other nations' freedoms—and, in this case, of another nation's very existence. When retribution fell upon him, an eminent newspaper which opposed the Sinai and Suez expeditions wrote with clear insight that "it would be ridiculous to permit Colonel Nasser to pose before the United Nations or the world as the innocent victim of aggression, or to hold a protecting hand over him. On the contrary, insofar as there is any one man guilty of aggression, it is the Egyptian President. . . ."* In similar vein, an implacable critic of the British and French actions writes: "Nasser was a Hitler-like menace to Israel but not to anybody else."**

In London, the Labor Leader, Hugh Gaitskell, had warned his countrymen on August 2, 1956 that the pattern was "very familiar. It is exactly the same that we encountered from Mussolini and Hitler in those years before the war."

Another critic of the Suez expedition has written a graphic account of Nasser in the public act of seizing the Suez Canal. This description will raise vivid memories in all who remember the fourth decade of this century:

"The same evening, at a mass meeting in Alexandria, Nasser announced the news to a screaming, hysterical crowd of 100,000 Egyptians. Sweating under the arc lights, gripping a microphone with both hands, he spoke for two and a half hours reviewing the whole of Egyptian foreign policy since the regime came to power, and screaming as the climax of his speech—

'Americans, may you choke to death on your fury! The annual income of the Suez Canal Company is \$100 million. Why not take it ourselves!—And it will be run by Egyptians! Egyptians! Egyptians!'

* *New York Times*, October 30, 1956.

***Middle East Crisis* by Wint and Calvocoressi, 1957, p. 84.

"The crowd swayed and chanted with frenzy. 'It was like watching', said one observer, 'a daemonic sorcerer conjuring up from the bowels of the earth the legions of hate and fury.'"*

It is remarkable how often the Hitler imagery arises on the lips and pens of diverse commentators when they seek to convey a picture of Nasser's personality and actions before Sinai. Is it difficult to imagine the apprehensions, and the consequent spirit of resolve, which welled up amongst a neighboring people saturated with agonizing memories of the havoc which a rampant dictatorship can perform even on the road to its own appointed doom?

IN EXPLAINING the official American attitude to the Suez and Sinai expeditions, President Eisenhower acknowledged on October 30, 1956 that the nations resisting Nasser "had been subjected to grave, repeated provocations." The question of provocation has special relevance to the one nation to whom "Nasser was a Hitler-like menace." An appraisal of Israel's choice must include an effort to imagine a small nation separated by twelve minutes flying time from an adversary equipped with aggressive strength of unknown potency, proclaiming an active "state of war," practicing a blockade in two out of three available waterways and establishing an encircling alliance designed to achieve the *coup de grace*. The comforting counsel that "it would have been better for Israel to have waited" is perhaps too facile when uttered from positions of safety thousands of miles away. Nobody who believes that Nasser's momentum was driving relentlessly towards Israel's destruction can dogmatically wish that its full impact had been awaited; and

* *The Suez War*, by Paul Johnson, New York, 1957, pp. 8-9.

it is significant that the critics of the Anglo-French action are so often forced to reserve judgment on Israel's decision. Israel does not have the continental expanse of an America which could reel under Pearl Harbor and gather its strength for the retaliation. She is not even a France or Poland whose territories were broad enough to allow them to bear the first assaults of the two World Wars and rally to summon aid from within and without. To bear the first blow might have simplified Israel's international posture; but the nation might well have celebrated its virtue posthumously.

There are some who interpret the United Nations Charter as meaning that if your neighbor advances against you with a sharp knife announcing his intention to cut your throat you must not move until he has made the first incision. This version, which bestows the initiative on the aggressor as a matter of right, can more easily be reconciled with the letter of the Charter than with its spirit. When the issue is one of survival every people must make its decision in solitude of responsibility. When the United Nations Charter acknowledges to every nation the "inherent" right of self-defense, it implicitly places this judgment in the individual domain and, at least in the first instance, outside the range of majority decisions. The leading authority on the Charter faces the problem lucidly:—

"Article 51 . . . states that nothing in the Charter impairs the inherent rights of self-defense 'if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations' and 'until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.' Presumably, it is the right of each Member . . . to decide when, and for how long, conditions exist which justify the exercise of this right. To this extent the Article clearly opens the

way for action which may be regarded by other Members as inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Organization."*

It should be remembered that Israel had been under blockade as well as under intermittent armed attacks for nine years. Thus, while the case for Israel's resistance is primarily moral and political in nature, it has a more solid foundation in formal legality than its critics have acknowledged.

It was the strength of this case which brought international opinion to favor—and, indeed, to establish—different arrangements in Gaza and the Straits of Tiran than those which prevailed on the eve of October 29. If Egyptian policy had not been aggressive in each sector, it would scarcely have been necessary to assume a new international responsibility in both. Gaza and the Gulf of Aqaba were important not only intrinsically, but as symbols of a purposeful belligerency by land and sea. To have evacuated them unconditionally, and thus to make way for the renewal of the explosion, would have convicted both Israel and the United Nations of startling irresponsibility. The decision to withdraw came as soon as it seemed that Israel forces would bequeath Gaza and the Gulf to a system of internationally supervised order, not to an Egyptian-controlled belligerency. The three Israel decisions of the crucial six months—to resist, to hold out in Gaza and Tiran, and to withdraw—are not contradictory with each other. They form a unitary pattern of which the central theme is change from belligerency to security, if not, as was originally hoped, across the whole range of Egyptian-Israel relations, then at least in the two main centers of potential conflict. The immediate sequel

* *The Charter of the United Nations. Commentary and Documents*, by Goodrich and Hambro, p. 299.

to Israel's withdrawal found the Negev, north and south, liberated for development and navigation where previously there were chronic insecurity and blockade.

SINAI and Suez plunged American policy into a tangled and agonizing dilemma. The ideas which set its early course were simple enough to be understood even by those who were injured through their application. In America, as elsewhere, there were many who perceived that the dilemma might not have arisen at all if the European powers had felt more consistent support against Nasser's seizure of their life-line, and if Israel had not been frustrated for over six months in her efforts to restore the terrifyingly swift change in the balance of arms. In examining the American orthodoxy in opposition to the use of force, it is only just to recall that the Western hemisphere contained no state, like Israel, which was in direct peril from a belligerent neighbor; and no continent like Europe which found its very line of sustenance seized by a tyrant's hand. Remoteness is not always an aid to judgment, and history will never know how a similar peril west of the Atlantic would have been endured or met. But, in any case, as the United States became more intimately engaged, its position evolved beyond the mere opposition to force into a recognition that causes of real substance and authority had dictated the resistance to Nasser. This development was too gradual to bring a constructive solution in the Suez Canal, which the United Nations cleared of physical and political obstruction—and then handed back, incredibly, to Nasser's unilateral national control. It was astonishing in Israel's eyes that the Anglo-French position in Port Said was not exchanged for an internationally controlled freedom of passage in the Suez Canal under the

auspices of the United Nations Emergency Force. On the other hand, Israel's tenacity for over four months gave time for an advancing American position to assert itself. By February, 1957 this position was formulated in terms of clear support for free passage in the Straits of Tiran, under the surveillance of United Nations forces, and for a maximal assertion of international responsibility in Gaza. In the Gulf of Aqaba the practical solution of stationing United Nations forces was enriched and deepened by Mr. Dulles' memorandum of February 11, 1957 proclaiming the legal and political principle of international navigation and advocating means of securing it. When all the leading maritime powers endorsed this doctrine, an important milestone was reached in the history of the Gulf as a recognized international waterway. Careful historians will, in fact, discern two elements in the United States approach: not only opposition to the military initiative of three friendly countries, but also a recognition that a return to the status quo of blockade and *Fedayeen* violence must be averted. On November 3, 1956 the United States representative in the United Nations had enunciated this second theme with great emphasis:

"Let us stop the futile process of patching up previous agreements and understandings, which but serve to provide new pretexts for further provocations. Let us face up to our responsibilities under the Charter. Let us work together for lasting settlement of what has become a dangerous threat to the peace of the world."

This implicit promise of a "new deal" for the Middle East was not sustained in the United Nations against powerful Arab-Asian pressures. But it did find a partial, if localized, fulfillment in the commitments which the

United States undertook, together with France and other countries, on the eve of Israel's withdrawal. These commitments are clearly established in the public minds of both peoples, and there have been perceptive American definitions of them, two of which aroused special interest in Israel and throughout the world. The first was a review published after Israel's withdrawal, pointing out that President Eisenhower

"... is more committed than the United States perhaps originally intended to a peaceful and prosperous Israel in the Middle East. When the President of the United States goes on the air to say what the United States is prepared to do to see that the Israelis do not have to face the same aggression again from Egypt, this amounts to more than sounding words of sympathy."*

In similar vein and with greater precision an American political commentator wrote on April 1, 1957:

"The honor and good faith of our Government and of the President himself are directly involved in the Israeli-Egyptian crisis. This is because Israel withdrew from Gaza and the Sinai Coast of the Gulf of Aqaba only after receiving certain assurances, or pledges from the United States. Without them it is a practical certainty that Israel would not have withdrawn from positions so important to its national existence.

"These assurances were examined and developed by the two Governments over a period of several weeks. The explanation which Mrs. Golda Meir, Israel Foreign Minister, made to the United Nations General Assembly on March 1st... was written in full collaboration with our State Department. Indeed, the original draft was extensively altered at the request of the State Dept.... Thus

Mrs. Meir's statement was actually a joint document.... It may be said that in some respects our assurances were only statements of our own policies and not guarantees that we could get the United Nations and other nations to go along with them. But we cannot escape our obligation... our honor and good faith are at stake."**

Thus the dialogue between America and Israel—at times the most painful but also the most intimate in which they had ever engaged—ended with the charting of paths along which both nations felt able to journey together. They and the world were to encounter perils which neither would have had to meet, but for the drastic way in which the majority of the United Nations had suppressed the resistance to its real foes by its genuine friends.

FOR SEVERAL years the critics of the United Nations clamored for more action and vigor. But the case in which the United Nations displayed its most vigorous action has become the most acute source of disquiet about its future. It is no small matter to find the first President of the General Assembly constrained to write the following words:

"Never before has the insufficiency of the United Nations as at present constituted stood out so clearly. In spite of its apparent success I believe that it has never come so near to the brink of failure. In the present United Nations setup, which is not what its founders wished and hoped it would be, everything short of war is allowed. Treaties may be violated, promises can be broken, a nation is licensed to menace its neighbors or to perpetrate any sort of trick on it, just as long as there is no actual war. The attitude of Egypt during the last few months is a case in point.

* *Time*, March 11, 1957.

**Ernest Lindley, *Newsweek*, April 1, 1957.

While Egypt denied transit through the Suez Canal to Israeli ships, sent death commandos on to Israeli soil, violated the Treaty of Constantinople, sent arms to be used against the French in Algeria and made preparations to attack its neighbor, the United Nations was powerless to intervene. Such intervention would not come within the scope of the Charter as at present interpreted. But let Israel in desperation send troops into the Sinai Peninsula, and let Anglo-French forces land at Port Said, and they are sure to be condemned. Meanwhile, those who are looking on impassively at the brutal repressions of the revolt in Hungary could not find words harsh enough to damn them . . .

"This brand of justice is nothing but a caricature. Such an interpretation of principles amounts to rewarding any nation which is audacious enough to accomplish the most reprehensible act but which very cleverly stops short, not of violence but of open war."*

Months later an even greater voice expressed a similar anxiety. Sir Winston Churchill's phrase was: "Hit-and-miss justice."

There is a double criticism here—not only discrimination between the Hungarian and Middle East crises, but also an even more serious discrimination within the framework of the Middle Eastern case, between the Egyptian provocations which the United Nations did nothing to restrain, and the consequent resistance, which the United Nations did everything to liquidate. In the end, the resistance was eliminated, but the capacity of provocation was restored, albeit inhibited by the presence of the United Nations forces at two of the explosive points. Even with

this reservation, the end of the drama was played out in a cold, harsh light. After all, the dual source of conflict had been Egypt's claim of belligerency against Israel and her assertion of an exclusively national jurisdiction in the Suez Canal. Suppressing a revolt against both these abuses, the United Nations left each of them intact. Unilateral belligerency and unilateral control of the Canal were actually restored to Egypt's hands. Egypt, more than any other state in history, had received the aid of the United Nations in its adversity—and had then reasserted the very anti-Charter attitudes which had brought her into need of aid. Because of Egypt's unconditional rehabilitation, the way was opened for the Syrian crisis a few months later. There was little sign in the Egyptian and Syrian attitudes of any gratitude towards the Western nations which had supported Nasser in his distress. The uncritical support of Nasser by a majority of the United Nations paved the way for the adverse developments in Syria.

"Insufficiency," "brink of failure" and "hit-and-miss justice" are heavy words when used by men of eminent lineage in the careful art of speech. But it will be difficult to challenge this sorrowful verdict until the United Nations evinces for Israel's security and for international rights in the Suez Canal at least a fraction of the zeal which it devoted to the salvage of Egypt's position in the winter of 1956. Equality is the first condition of justice; and a justice which is not equal is not justice at all.

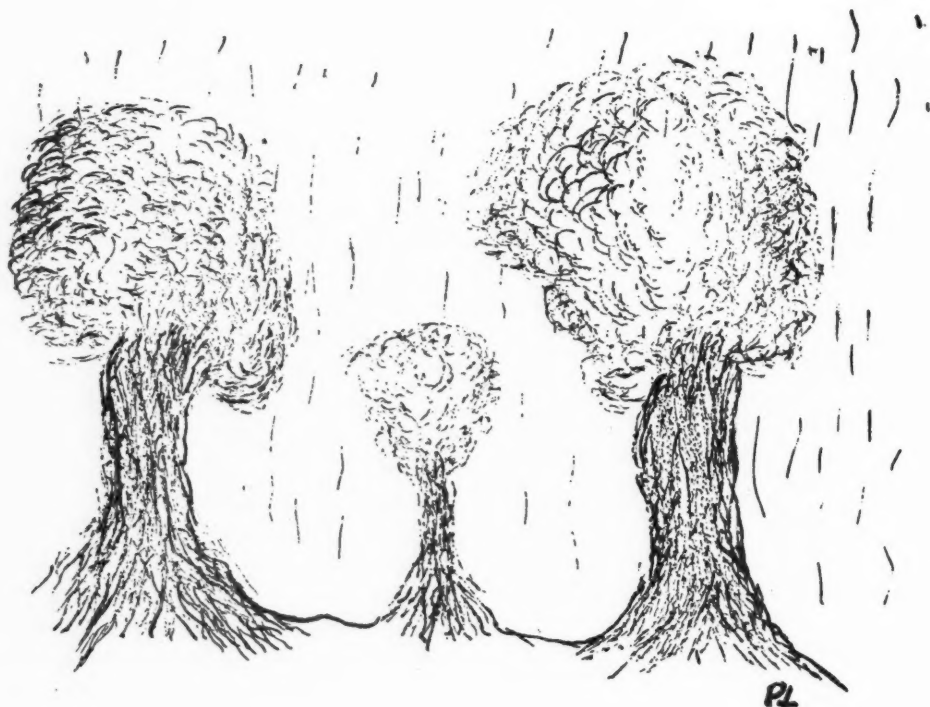
The preponderance of Arab numerical strength is making it increasingly difficult for justice to be done when it conflicts with any Arab claim or position. A shift of power has taken place from a veto-locked Security Council to a General Assembly in which there is no equilibrium between Asia and Eu-

* *The West in Disarray*, by Paul Henri Spaak, Foreign Affairs, New York, January 1957, pp. 185-186.

rope, and still less between the Arab world and Israel. But the numerical anomaly is only part of the crisis. No less perilous are habits and attitudes which are becoming crystallized through lack of informed and vigilant criticism. There is a "fire brigade" approach which is content to put out the flames without pondering too much on how the combustion arose. There is a reluctance to follow a chain of violence to the first link from which it takes its origin—usually in some provocation which "cleverly stops short not of violence but of open war." To cut off a nation from its normal maritime access to two-thirds of the world is a case in point. What people is there who would suffer this for eight years? All in all, the workings of our international mech-

anism during the crisis of last year must lead, not to slogans of complacency and triumph, but to serious efforts at improvement, readjustment and repair.

History has not spoken the last word on this swift and drastic episode. There is room for faith that the Middle Eastern future belongs to national independence, not to dictator-ridden hegemony; to freedom of the seas, not to squalid blockades; to respect for the rights of all, and not of Arab nationalism alone. If this faith is vindicated across the unfolding years, its true defenders will of a certainty include those in Israel who, in resisting tyranny, hallowed the Sinai desert with their sacrifice.



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The following survey of the emergence and evolution of the Jewish novelist on the American literary scene is based on a series of three lectures given by LESLIE A. FIEDLER at the Theodor Herzl Institute last winter. Readers of *Midstream* will remember Mr. FIEDLER's incisive essay, "Negro and Jew—Encounter in America," which appeared in the Summer, 1956 issue.

The Breakthrough

The American Jewish Novelist and the Fictional Image of the Jew

By LESLIE A. FIEDLER

THOUGH there were American Jewish novelists of real distinction in the first three decades of the twentieth century, it is not until the 'thirties that such writers play a critical role in the total development of American literature. From that point on, they have felt themselves and have been felt by the general public as more than pioneers and interlopers, more than exotics and eccentrics. Indeed, the patterns of Jewish speech, the experiences of Jewish childhood and adolescence, the smells and tastes of the Jewish kitchen, the sounds of the Jewish synagogue have become, since 1930, staples of the American novel.

It is, of course, Jewish urban life in particular which has provided a standard décor for the novel: the life of New York, and especially of the ghettos of the East Side, Williamsburg, etc. In a certain sense, indeed, the movement of Jewish material from the periphery to the center is merely one phase of a much larger shift within the world of the American novel: that urbanization

of our fiction which accompanies the urbanization of our general culture.

Our literary 'twenties were dominated by provincial writers like Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis, even Faulkner and Hemingway, who close that period and provide a bridge into the age that succeeds it. Whatever their talent, they remained essentially country boys who had come to the big city, who had wandered under their own power into New Orleans or New York, who had been transported by the A.E.F. to Paris. Whether they stayed or returned home again did not finally matter; even when they wrote about the city, they wrote about it as seen through the eyes of one who had come late into it and had remained a stranger.

Despite an occasional sport like Myron Brinig, who writes about Montana, or MacKinlay Kantor, whose subject matter includes hound-dogs, Jewish writers do not fit into such a provincial pattern, which does not, in any case, reflect the typical, the *mythi-*

cal Jewish experience in America. Their major entry into the American novel had to await its urbanization, though that entry is not, to be sure, only a function of such urbanization. It is an extension, too, of the break-up of the long-term Anglo-Saxon domination of our literature which began in the generation just before the First World War. The signal that this double process had started was the emergence of Dreiser as the first novelist of immigrant stock to take a major position in American fiction. There is something ironic in the fact that the breach through which succeeding Jewish writers poured was opened by one not innocent of anti-Semitism; but once the way was opened for immigrants in general, it was possible for Jews to follow.

At any rate, by the end of the 'thirties (a recent historian of Jewish literature points out) there were some sixty American Jewish writers of fiction who could be called without shameless exaggeration "prominent." A close examination of that historian's list proves rather disheartening; for of the sixty-odd names he mentions, fewer than ten seem to me worthy of remembering; and three of these (Abe Cahan, Ludwig Lewisohn and Ben Hecht) belong, in theme and significance, to the 'twenties in which their major work was accomplished. The writers who remain of the original sixty are Edward Dahlberg, Leonard Ehrlich, Daniel Fuchs, Meyer Levin (recently come to life by reaching back into the Jewish Society of the 'twenties for an image of violence and disgust stark enough to move us) and Henry Roth. Even if one were to add to these certain others not included in the original group, say, Waldo Frank, Maurice Samuel, Isidor Schneider and Michael Gold, who are at least symptomatically important, it would make a constellation by no means inspiring; for no one

of them is a figure of first importance even in the period itself.

Fuchs and Roth are writers of considerable talent, even of major talent, perhaps; but for various reasons, their achievement is limited. Roth is the author of a single novel, *Call it Sleep*; and Fuchs, though he wrote three before his retreat to Hollywood and silence (and despite a recent come-back in short fiction) wrote only one book of considerable scope: *Homage to Blenheim*. There remains, of course, Nathan Wallenstein Weinstein, who preferred to call himself Nathanael West—and whose long neglect by official writers on the period is now being overbalanced by his enthusiastic rediscoverers. For a long time, scarcely anyone but Henry Popkin* considered him worth touting; but now the republication of his whole works and his translation into a Broadway play have given West back a full-scale existence. There is no use being carried away, however; no use in concealing from ourselves the fact that what has been restored to us is only another tragically incomplete figure, whose slow approach to maturity ends in death. And there remains further the troublesome question: is West in any effective sense a Jew?

Though the 'thirties mark the mass entry of the Jewish writer into American fiction, they do not last long enough to see any major triumphs. There is no Jewish writer among the recognized reigning figures of the period: no Dos Passos, no Farrell, no Steinbeck; there is no Jewish writer who played a comparable role to the continuing major novelists of the 'twenties: no Fitzgerald, no Hemingway, no Faulkner. There is no Jewish author

* I have in conversation, as well as through reading his articles, so long exchanged ideas with Henry Popkin on the American Jewish novelist that I am indebted to him everywhere.

(with the possible exception of West) who can rank even with middle-generation fictionists like Robert Penn Warren, who seemed at the end of the 'thirties promising young men.

Even in the creation of images of the Jew, a job the Jewish writer in the United States has long been struggling to take out of the hands of the Gentiles, there is no Jewish writer who can compare in effectiveness to Thomas Wolfe. Just as Sherwood Anderson and Hemingway and Fitzgerald succeeded in making their hostile images of Jews imaginative currencies in the 'twenties, Wolfe succeeded in imposing on his period a series of portraits derived from his experiences at New York University: enamelled Jewesses with melon breasts; crude young male students pushing him off the sidewalk; hawk-beaked Jewish elders, presumably manipulating the world of wealth and power from behind the scenes.

WHAT, THEN, was the modest contribution of the Jewish writer to the fiction of the 'thirties, and how did this prepare for later successes going beyond anything he himself achieved? Predictably enough, a large number of American Jewish writers of the period were engaged in the production of the best-advertised (though, alas, quite infertile) art-product of the period: the Proletarian Novel. Perhaps the best way to define that sub-form of the novel is to remind ourselves that it is the major result of applying to the creation of literature the theory that "art is a weapon"; and that therefore it was in intent anti-art, or at least, opposed to everything which "petty-bourgeois formalism" considered art to be. Perhaps because of the contradictions inherent in such a view, it had one of the shortest lives ever lived by a literary genre. One speaks of the Proletarian Novel as a form of the 'thirties,

but in fact it was finished by 1935 or 1936, becoming at that point merely formula writing, completely at the mercy of political shifts inside the Communist movement.

In any case, the Proletarian Novel is not, as its name suggests, merely a book about proletarians; it is alternatively about poor farmers, members of the lower-middle class; and most often, in *fact* if not in theory, about intellectuals: specifically about the intellectual's attempt to identify himself with the oppressed and with the Movement which claimed to represent them. The Proletarian Novel was, then, ideological fiction dedicated to glorifying the Soviet Union and the Communist Party, and to proving that that Party was the consciousness of the working class in America as well as in the rest of the world. Yet the most characteristic aspect of such novels escapes ideological definition completely, for it is a product of the age as it worked on writers beneath the level of consciousness of class or anything else. This is the *tone* of the Proletarian Novel: a note of sustained and self-satisfied hysteria bred on the one hand of Depression-years despair and on the other of the sense of being selected as brands to be snatched from the fire.

The Stalinist movement in the United States has always attracted chiefly marginal and urban groups; and if one thinks of the marginal and urban in the United States, he thinks, of course, largely of Jews. Especially in its cultural activities, in the John Reed Clubs, on the *New Masses* (and those cultural activities were of major importance in the 'thirties, when the Communists captured few factories but many publishing houses), Jews participated in a proportion completely out of accord with their role in the total population. Indeed, the Movement was by way of being the typical strategy of

the ambitious young Jew in a time of Depression for entering fully into American life. Jews who would have been dismayed by older kinds of bourgeois assimilation, embraced this new method which allowed them at once to identify themselves with America and protest against certain aspects of its life.

Similarly, the intellectual, whether Jewish or not, found in the Movement an escape from the sense of alienation from American society which the 'twenties had brought to acute consciousness. One must realize the attractiveness of the orthodox Communist "culture" sponsored by the *New Masses* for the young man who was both an intellectual and a Jew. It is scarcely surprising that so many of them turned to the Proletarian Novel as their chosen form; even those who for aesthetic reasons found the genre unpalatable apologized for their apostasy, or tried to make up for it: like Nathanael West feeding his more orthodox contemporaries at the family hotel and boasting of having walked the picket line with James T. Farrell and Leane Zugsmith.

Still, no matter how alluring the Proletarian Novel might have been to the un-proletarian Jewish writer, he could not, of course, write such a novel as a Jew. It was during the 'thirties, one remembers, that the Stalinists were officially condemning Jewish chauvinism in Palestine, and attacking Ludwig Lewisohn (who had entered his Zionist phase) as the blackest of reactionaries; and in those days, "race consciousness" was thought to be inimical to class consciousness. It is not surprising, after all, that a recent survey of the literature of the period, in a book called *The Radical Novel in America*, can point out only one Proletarian Novel which dealt specifically with anti-Semitism. This is a problem which must wait for the Popular Front novel and the Mid-

dlebow Liberal Novel, which is to say, for the 'forties.

ALL OF which does not mean, of course, that a Jewish writer could not *begin* with his Jewishness; and, as a matter of fact, Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money*, which appeared in 1930, was the prototype of the Proletarian Novel, going through eleven printings in its first year and setting a pattern for succeeding writers. Not quite a novel, really, or quite an autobiography, it seems more than anything a collection of vignettes of Jewish life making a moral point—a conversion tract illustrating the passage of a thinking man from Judaism to Communism. The pattern is simple enough (it is picked up and reinforced later in Isidor Schneider's *From the Kingdom of Necessity*): to make of "Jewish nationalism" and the Jewish religion the chief symbols of reaction; the pious man, the pillar of the synagogue, appears as a landlord and an owner of whorehouses; the rabbi becomes an old lecher; and the rituals of the Jews instances of hypocrisy and backwardness. The *Seder* (one thinks of what Herman Wouk will be doing fifteen years later to redeem all this!) an especial horror: "Ironical, isn't it? No people has suffered as the Jews have from the effects of nationalism and no people has held to it with such terrible intensity. . . ."

Can there be, then, in the American Jewish proletarian writer any Jewishness beyond a peculiarly Jewish self-hatred, a Jewish anti-Jewishness? To be sure, there is always available to him Jewish local color: the stumbling speech, the squalor, the joy peculiar to the Lower East Side or Brownsville; but these are by the 'thirties already sentimentalized clichés also available to the makers of Cohen and Kelly type movies. There is, beyond this, the con-

stant awareness of alienation which belongs to the Jew: the sense of loneliness not as an accident but as a kind of chosenness; and in a writer like Gold the ancestral cry of "*Eli, Eli . . .*" persists. "In my ears still ring the lamentations of the lonely old Jews without money: 'I cash clothes, I cash clothes, my God, why has thou forsaken me!'"

Not only has the concept of the choosing of all Israel in an election which seems an abandonment been transferred from the whole people to a part—to the poor alone; but in the process, what began as a mystery has become hopelessly sentimentalized. It is not for nothing that Mike Gold has been called the Al Jolson of the Communist Movement; indeed, in and through him, a cloying tradition of self-pity, which is also, alas, Jewish, and which had already possessed the American stage, moves on into literature. If the Communist Jewish writer can sing "*Eli, Eli . . .*" to his own tune, he can also sing "*A Yiddishe Mamme*" in a proletarian version. Here is Mike Gold once more: "My humble funny little East Side mother. . . . She would have stolen or killed for us. . . . Mother! Momma! I am still bound to you by the cords of birth. . . . I must remain faithful to the poor because I cannot be faithless to you."

All of this is secondary, however; the special meaning of Judaism for the radical writer of the 'thirties is, expectedly enough, its Messianism. "I believed," Gold writes, "the Messiah was coming, too. It was the one point in the Jewish religion I could understand clearly. We had no Santa Claus, but we had a Messiah." It is understandable, after all, that Marxism should feel at home with the Messianic ideal, since Marx seems to have envisaged himself, more often than not, as

a prophetic figure: the last of the prophets promising a new heaven and a new earth. With the Russian Revolution, however, and the differentiation of Bolshevism, a new tone is apparent in Socialist messianism: a note at once apocalyptic and violent.

The old-fashioned sanity that characterizes Abraham Cahan is abandoned; and especially anything that smacks of the pacifism of the 'twenties is rejected in favor of an ideal of "hard Bolshevism" and class war. Two quite different sorts of feelings are involved, often confused with each other but logically quite separable: on the one hand, the desire, compounded of the self-hatred of the Jew and the self-distrust of the intellectual, that the good, clean, healthy workers of the future take over and destroy all that has come before them; on the other, an impulse to identify oneself with the future, to feel oneself for once strong and brutal and capable of crushing all that has baffled and frustrated one's dreams. "Oh workers' Revolution." Gold's protagonist cries out at the book's climax, "You brought hope to me, a lonely suicidal boy. You are the true Messiah. . . ."

Jewish American fiction in the 'thirties, whether specifically "proletarian" or not, is characterized by this frantic religiosity without God, this sense of the holiness of violence. Wherever one turns, there is the sense of a revelation, mystic and secular and terrible as the only possible climax: the challenge to an unbeliever in God to redeem Williamsburg at the end of Fuchs' first novel; the prayer to Pure Mathematics as a savior in Maurice Samuel's *Beyond Woman*; the invocation of the holy rage of John Brown in Leonard Ehrlich's *John Brown's Body*; the baffled and self-destructive attempt of Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts* to become Christ in a Christless world. . . .

THE JEWISH novel of the 'twenties has as its typical theme assimilation and as its typical imagery the erotic; but the novel of the 'thirties is in theme and imagery, as well as politics, apocalyptic. Sex does not disappear from it completely, for the conquest of erotic taboos is a continuing concern of the contemporary novel; but its meaning and importance alike have been altered as compared with, say, *The Rise of David Levinsky* or Ben Hecht's *A Jew in Love*. From the Jew in love to the Jews without money of the 'thirties is a long way whose direction is indicated by Maurice Samuel's title *Beyond Woman*. Where erotic material does appear, it is likely to have the function which it assumes in Gold's book, to have become one more exhibit in the Chamber of Horrors: evidence of the evils of prostitution or the prevalence of homosexual rape of small boys under Capitalism. More generally speaking, after Mike Gold, sex tends to be treated as just another sort of violence in a violent America.

In the 1930's, the Jewish American novelists, like most of their Gentile fellows, become subscribers to the cult of violence; though for the Jewish writer such an allegiance has a special pathos because of the long opposition to violence in the Jewish inheritance. It is one more way of denying his fathers. And what could he do in any case? In those shabby, grey years the dream of violence possesses the American imagination like a promise of deliverance. Politics is violent and a-politics equally so; whatever else a man accepts or denies, he does not deny terror.

Obviously, the 'thirties did not invent terror and violence in our fiction; as far back as our books go, there are images of horror: the torn corpse stuffed up the chimney; the skull split by a tomahawk; the whale spouting blood.

Even a "funny book" like *Huckleberry Finn* has more corpses than anybody can ever remember. There are, however, two transformations in the 'thirties of the role and handling of violence.

The first is the *urbanization of violence*; that is to say, violence is transferred from the world of nature to the world of society, from what man must endure to what man has made. There is of course, a special horror in considering the law of fang and claw walled in but unmitigated by the brick and glass of the city-planners. Even a provincial writer like Faulkner is driven in those years to move into the city streets for images of terror adequate to the times; and *Sanctuary* remains of all his books the most appalling, and Popeye, his sole urban protagonist, his most monstrous creation.

But the 'thirties mark the climax of an even more critical change: the ennobling of violence as "the midwife of history." Under the name of the Revolution, violence becomes not something to be fled, not the failing of otherwise admirable men, not a punishment for collective guilt—but the crown of social life. What had begun just after 1789 with the Terror and had been hailed in America by the theoretically bloody Jefferson, received in an age of mechanized warfare and mass production its final form. The lust for pain of Nietzsche and the hypostasizing of History by Hegel culminated in the twin horrors of Nazi and Soviet brutality; but a worse indignity had already been worked on the minds of intellectuals, conditioned in advance to accept one or the other.

In light of this, it is easy to understand that questions of ideology are secondary, that it is the pure love-fear of violence which distinguishes the novel of the 'thirties: a kind of passion not unlike that which moved the Ger-

mans before their final defeat, a desire for some utter cataclysm to end the dull dragging-out of impotent suffering. Not only Communist-oriented writers produced such horror literature, but southerners like John Peale Bishop (in *Act of Darkness*) or Robert Penn Warren (in *At Heaven's Gate*); Hemingway made his obeisance to the mode in *To Have and Have Not*; and even so mild an upper-middlebrow traditionalist as James Gould Cozzens produced in *Castaway* a novella of the required shrillness.

In the official Communist version, the vision of the apocalypse is translated into that of the "Final Conflict" between worker and boss, Good and Evil; but this pat formula the better Jewish American novelists could not quite stomach. Rather typically they temper the violence they cannot reject with humor, an ironic refusal to enter the trap completely. At the close of Daniel Fuchs' *Homage to Blenheim*, the three *shlemiels* who are his protagonists have reached the end of their illusions and are looking at each other in despair. One has come to realize that he will run a delicatessen for the rest of his life; another has come to see that the greatest event in his career will be winning three hundred dollars on a long-shot.

"Well," said Coblenz, "don't take it so hard. Cheer up. Why don't you turn to Communism?"

"Communism?" cried Mrs. Balkin. "Listen to Mr. Bungalow. Communism!"

"What has Communism got to do with it?" Munves sincerely wanted to know.

"It's the new happy ending. You feel lousy? Fine! Have a revelation and onward to the Revolution!"

Fuchs' protagonists remain to the end victims and anti-heroes, incapable of any catastrophe more tragic than the

pratfall; but this is the traditional strategy of the comic writer. In a more complex way, Nathanael West and Henry Roth manage to achieve at once the anti-heroic and the almost-tragic. In West, the comic butt is raised to the level of Everybody's Victim, the skeptical and unbelieving Christ of a faithless world; in Roth, the *shlemiel* is moved back to childhood, portrayed as the victim of circumstances he can never understand, only transcend.

West, of course, remains a humorist still; though in him humor is expressed almost entirely in terms of the grotesque, that is to say, on the borderline between jest and horror. In his novels, violence is not only subject matter; it is also technique, a way of apprehending as well as a tone and theme. Especially in the *Dream Life of Balzo Snell*, one can see what West learned from the Surrealists during his stay in France: the violent conjunctions, the discords at the sensitive places where squeamishness demands harmony; the belly-laugh that shades off into hysteria.

YET HE is a peculiarly American case, too. In one of his few published critical notes he announces: "In America violence is idiomatic, in America violence is daily." And it is possible to see him as just another of our professional tough guys, one of the "boys in the back room" (the phrase is Edmund Wilson's—the title of a little book in which he treated West along with John O'Hara). But West is, despite his own disclaimers, in a real sense, a Jew. He is racked, that is to say, by guilt in the face of violence, shocked and tormented every day in a world where violence is daily. In *Miss Lonelyhearts*, he creates a kind of portrait of himself as one all nerves and no skin, the fool of pity whom the quite ordinary horror of ordinary life lacerates to the point of madness. His

protagonist is given the job of answering "letters from the lovelorn" on a daily newspaper; and finds in this job, a "joke" to others, a revelation of human misery too acute to bear.

But this is West's analogue for the function of the writer, whom he considers obliged unremittingly to regard a suffering he is too sensitive to abide; and in no writer is there so absolute a sense of the misery of being human. He is child enough of his age to envision an apocalypse; but his apocalypse is a defeat for everyone. The protagonist of *Miss Lonelyhearts* is shot reaching out in love toward a man he has (against his will) offended; the hero-shlemiel of *A Cool Million: or The Dismantling of Lemuel Pitkin* goes from one absurd anti-Horatio Alger disaster to another, and after his death becomes the hero of an American Fascist movement. But the real horror-climax of his life and the book comes when, utterly maimed, he stands on a stage between two corny comedians, who wallop him with rolled up newspapers in time to their jokes until his wig comes off (he has been at one point scalped), his glass eye falls out, and his wooden leg falls away; after which they provide him with new artificial aids and begin again.

It is in *The Day of the Locust*, however, West's last book and the only novel on Hollywood not somehow trivialized by its subject, that one gets the final version of The Apocalypse according to Nathanael West. At the end of this novel, a painter, caught in a rioting mob of fans at a Hollywood premiere, dreams, as he is crushed by the rioters, his masterpiece, "The Burning of Los Angeles":

Across the top he had drawn the burning city, a great bonfire of architectural styles . . . Through the center . . . spilling into the middle foreground, came the mob carrying

baseball bats and torches—all those poor devils who can only be stirred by the promise of miracles and then only to violence, a great United Front of screwballs and screwboxes to purify the land. No longer bored, they sang and danced joyously in the red light of the flames.

West does not seem to me finally a really achieved writer; his greatness lies like a promise just beyond his last novel and is frustrated by his early death; but he is the inventor for America of a peculiarly modern kind of book whose claims to credence are perfectly ambiguous. One does not know whether he is being presented with the outlines of a nightmare endowed with a sense of reality or the picture of a reality become indistinguishable from nightmare. For the record, it must be said that the exploiters of such ambiguity are typically Jews: Kafka for the continent, West for us.

But in what sense is West a Jew at all? There is a violent flight from Jewish self-consciousness in his work; indeed, in *Balso Snell*, there is a bitter portrait of the kind of Jewish artist who feels obliged to insist on his origins:

"Sirrah!" the guide cried in an enormous voice, "I am a Jew! and whenever anything Jewish is mentioned, I find it necessary to say that I am a Jew. I'm a Jew! A Jew!"

Indeed, whenever a Jew is directly identified in West, he is portrayed viciously enough to satisfy the most rabid anti-Semite; although one must hasten to add that this is balanced by portraits of anti-Semites which would gratify any Jew. Finally, however, anti-Semitism and anti-anti-Semitism do not really add up to Jewishness, much less cancel each other out. West's changed name is surely a clue; he is the first American Jewish writer to wear a name which is a

disguise; the exact opposite of Henry Harland, first author of an American book with a Jewish milieu, who called himself Sidney Luska and tried to pass as a compatriot of his protagonists.

West, we are told, made a point of dressing in a Brooks Brothers suit, carrying a tightly rolled umbrella and going, conspicuously, on hunting trips—which is to say, he insisted in all ways on making himself the antitype of the conventional Jewish intellectual. Yet it seems to me inconceivable that anyone but an urban, second-generation Jew in revolt against his background could have produced the novels from *Balzo Snell* to *The Day of the Locust*. Certainly, the epigram of C. M. Dougherty, which he himself quotes, seems applicable to Nathanael West: "The Semites are like to a man sitting in a cloaca to the eyes, and whose brows touch heaven."

HENRY ROTH is quite another matter. *Call it Sleep*, which appeared in 1935, and which no one will reprint despite continuing critical acclaim, is a *specifically* Jewish book, the best single book by a Jew about Jewishness written by an American, certainly through the 'thirties and perhaps ever. Technically, Roth owes a great deal to James Joyce; and, indeed, it is the strategy of intense concentration on fragmented detail and the device of stream-of-consciousness (both learned from *Ulysses*), which protect his novel from the usual pitfalls of the ghetto book. He reverses the fatal trend toward long-winded chronicle, which had at once inflated and dimmed the portrayal of Jewish immigrant society from Abe Cahan's life-long study of David Levinsky to Ludwig Lewisohn's "saga" of four generations. The events of *Call it Sleep* cover two years of ghetto life, from 1911 to 1913, and are funnelled through the mind of a boy who is six

at the start of the book. It is through the sensibility of this sensitive, poetic, mama-haunted, papa-hating Jewish child, full of fears and half-perceptions and misunderstandings, that the clichés of the form are redeemed to poetry.

But he serves another purpose, too; that of helping the author, apparently committed to the ends of the Movement, evade ideology completely. In the place of the Marxian class struggle, Roth sets an almost Dickensian vision of the struggle between the child and society, of the child as Pure Victim. The lonely boy and the hostile city make only the first in a series of counterpoints on which the book is based: the greenhorn and the American; a subtle and lovely Yiddish and a brutal, grey English; grossness and poetry; innocence and experience, finally Gentile and Jew. In a way, quite unexpected in the 'thirties, Roth plays off the values of the *Cheder* against the values of an outside world dedicated to a pagan hunger for sex and success.

The climax of the book comes when David, the young protagonist, thrusts the handle of a milk-ladle down into a crack between streetcar rails and is shocked into insensibility. He has learned earlier of the power of the rails, when captured and tortured by a gang of Gentile hoods on the previous Passover; and has come somehow to identify that power with the coal of fire by which the mouth of Isaiah was cleansed. He feels the need of a similar cleansing, for young as he is, he has the sense of having played pander to his cousin Esther and a Gentile boy in order to be accepted in that boy's world. Just before he passes into complete unconsciousness, David is granted a vision—once more the apocalypse—in which all that troubles him is healed: his father's paranoid rage and fear of cuckoldry; his mother's mute suffering and erotic fantasies; his own

terrors and apostasies. Blended into his vision are the harsh cries of the street and the voice of a Socialist speaker prophesying the day on which the Red Cock will crow. For the vision neither the eight-year-old David nor the author have a name; and as the boy falls from consciousness, he thinks: "One might as well call it sleep."

After this spectacular achievement, Roth wrote no more novels; he works now, one hears, in an insane asylum in upstate New York—and an occasional story reveals him still haunting his old material without conviction or power. It is not an untypical case in the history of American Jewish writers in the 'thirties. Gold and Schneider lapsed into mere pamphleteering; West and Fuchs moved off to Hollywood, where the former died; no promises were fulfilled. Looking back, one sees a series of apparent accidents and ideological crippings, acts of cowardice and despair; and yet there is a sense that this universal failure is not merely the function of personal weakness but of a more general situation. Although all outward circumstances in the time of the Great Depression conspired to welcome the Jewish writer, the inward life of the Jewish community was not yet defined enough to sustain a major writer, or even to provide him with something substantial against which to define himself in protest.

II.

IT is only during the past fifteen or twenty years that such a definition has been achieved. In this period, Jewish self-consciousness in America has endured certain critical readjustments under pressure from world events: the rise and fall of Hitler; the consequent dissolution of virtually the whole European Jewish Community; the establishment of the State of Israel, and the

need to redefine the allegiance of American Jews as Jews and as Americans. Other less spectacular developments have exercised an influence, too: the closing off of mass immigration and the slow disappearance of Yiddish as a spoken language; the elimination of the "greenhorn" as a typical Jewish figure—all this accompanied by an increasing general prosperity for the majority of American Jews. No longer is our story that of the rise of an occasional David Levinsky, but that of almost the whole Jewish people on the march toward the suburbs; of the transformation of essential Jewish life into bourgeois life.

At the same moment, there has been a complementary entry of the Jews into the academic world. One reads with surprise and incredulity that when Ludwig Lewisohn was graduated from Columbia, he was advised not to hope for a job teaching English anywhere in America. More and more these days, even in this sensitive Anglo-Saxon area, Jews have come to write and teach; and only the most unreconstructed backwoods anti-Semite is heard to murmur bitterly about men named Greenspan or Schwartzstein lecturing on Emerson or Thoreau. Jews, indeed, have come to control many of the positions of prestige in the intellectual world of America, as editors and journalists and lay critics as well as teachers and writers.

We live at a time when there exists what can be called either a temptation or an opportunity, at any rate, the possibility of Jews entering fully into the suburban-exurban pattern of success, conformity and acceptance in an America where right-minded citizens protest teaching *The Merchant of Venice*, and blatant anti-Semitism exists chiefly in the most backward elements of the working class and in the backwoods of the South. For better or

for worse, the task of the Jewish-American novelist now is to give some sense of the settling down of Jews in our steam-heated, well-furnished *Galut*; or to struggle against it, if such a struggle is still possible.

For this reason, we are through with the traditional "up from the ghetto" kind of Jewish fiction as a living form. In such books as Alfred Kazin's *A Walker in the City*, Isaac Rosenfeld's *Passage from Home*, or *An End to Dying* by the very young writer Sam Astrachan, one sees attempts to redeem the old pattern; but such attempts seem finally nostalgic and vestigial—echoes of yesterday's concerns. What, then, is central and vital in the recent novel as written by American Jews? Perhaps the best way to begin to answer this is to consider the situation left by the collapse of the Proletarian Novel and the exhaustion of the messianic spirit.

Even before the end of the 'thirties, when the most aware began to feel that the post-World War I era was over and the pre-World War II era had already begun, proletarian fiction was officially liquidated. The Communist Party through its cultural organs began to prepare for the Popular Front Novel, for a kind of fiction *pious* rather than *apocalyptic* in its approach. No longer was intransigence the keynote, but cooperation; no longer were the "workers" the subject, but "the little people"; no longer was the *International* required mood-music, but *America the Beautiful*. Sentimentality had replaced terror; and those who looked back longingly toward bloodier days were condemned as "infantile leftists."

Most crucial of all, the American Left, which had traditionally associated itself with the avant-garde in literature, turned away toward Hollywood and Broadway and nightclub folksingers

from the Village. The concept of Art as a Weapon no longer led to old-fashioned Agitprop productions, but to slick creations provided by movie writers or Madison Avenue ad-men with bad consciences. The distinguished names, available in the 'thirties at least for petitions and pamphlets, Dreiser or Farrell or Dos Passos, began to be replaced by Rex Stout and Donald Ogden Stewart, Dashiell Hammett and Howard Fast.

Fast is particularly interesting as the last full-time bard of the Movement, its most faithful middlebrow servant in the arts. He has in recent months reached a final crisis of conscience and has made at last a public break with the Communist Party; but for some fifteen years beginning in 1942 he managed almost alone to create a kind of sub-literature in tune with its changing political line. In *The Unvanquished* and *Citizen Tom Paine*, he found a way of adapting the historical novel to Stalinist uses, of making its sentimentality underwrite the pieties of "progressive politics"; and thus broke out of the long silence which had followed the collapse of proletarian fiction. If he turned at last into the most dogged sort of formula writer, it was due only in part to his natural limitations. No one could have stood up long under the demand to redeem George Washington when "Americanism" becomes respectable; to refurbish Judah Maccabee when Judaism comes back into fashion; or to get Sacco and Vanzetti out of the mothballs when all else fails. That the official Popular Front hack be a Jew is in some ways ironical but not unexpected; for among the last faithful left to the Communists in America were certain Jews clinging to the ragged cliché that in the Soviet Union, at whatever price, anti-Semitism had been eliminated.

THE ACCOMMODATION of the Stalinist left to middlebrow pressures (and the more complicated adjustment of the anti-Stalinist left in the pages of *Partisan Review*) has left no place for the instinctively radical writer to turn. There is no more dismaying prospect than the loneliness and bewilderment of the belated apocalyptic writer, especially when he is too young for the experience of the 'thirties, and has to make a second-hand, home-made version of class struggle fiction—out of G.I. platitudes and memories of Marxism. James Jones is, perhaps, the outstanding representative of the group; and Norman Mailer its chief Jewish proponent. In the latter's *The Naked and the Dead*, for instance, the Fascist villain out of a hundred weary Agitprop entertainments appears as General Cummings, surely one of the most improbable characters in all fiction.

Such writers, having no center, are provincials in the deepest sense of the word: that is to say, they repeat what they have never heard and invent all over again what is already worn out. Mailer is a case in point, recapitulating the whole recent history of literature before him: he rewrites the anti-war novel in *The Naked and the Dead*, the anti-Hollywood novel in *The Deer Park*, the novel of political disillusionment in *Barbary Shore*. Only the hectic sexuality, which threatens, despite his conscious intent, to replace politics completely, seems his own; the rest is unacknowledged (I suspect, unaware) quotation.

As in the writers of the 'thirties, in Mailer what remains of Jewishness is translated into social protest; though the chief rebels of his books are (like West's) almost pointedly *not* Jews. And yet in one sense, he is more the child of his sentimental times than he would be pleased to admit; certainly there appears for the first time in *The Naked*

and the Dead, what is to become a standard character in the liberal-middlebrow war book: the Jewish Sad Sack. In Mailer's Goldstein, who finds the chief horror of war anti-Semitism in his own ranks, there is present in embryo Irwin Shaw's Noah Ackerman—and the protagonist of a score of movies to come.

Such lapses into the banal vocabulary of the middlebrows are, however, rare in Mailer. He may be clumsy and provincial, but he is above all things honest; and he refuses to endorse the clichés of enlightened liberalism. There is something healthy, I think, in preferring yesterday's platitudes to today's; for they are at least unfashionable, assurances that the writer is not merely on the make. Mailer is not, in any case, a typical figure, standing apart as he does from the two major developments which have followed the collapse of the Proletarian Novel.

Both these developments are of considerable importance for an understanding of Jewish writers in America, since both are in large part products of Jewish writers, and both help to establish the background against which the later Jewish writer defines himself. The first development is a kind of literary Jacobinism: a resistance to the separation of radical politics and avant-garde art. Its adherents would reconstitute the alliance of anti-bourgeois social criticism and anti-bourgeois literary experiment; but this they would do outside of any party orthodoxy. The second is a species of literary liberalism which aims at rescuing Popular Front art, that is, self-righteous, middlebrow art, from the Communists in favor of an enlightened segment of the bourgeoisie. Let us consider them in reverse order.

The middlebrow liberal or liberal-colored fictionist responds to the demands of a certain novel-reading

section of the middle class which would like to be Philistine in a really arty kind of way. Such readers are more concerned with social problems than with art, and turn to novels merely as occasions for thinking about such "important problems." The kind of middlebrow fiction produced for their benefit has established itself everywhere from *Good Housekeeping* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, on the one hand, to the *New Yorker*, on the other. One of its newer sub-varieties, science fiction, has opened up a whole series of periodical and book-length markets; and in its more traditional forms it has even won real triumphs in the major book clubs.

This kind of novel in form combines a clear narrative line (no confusing flashbacks or troublesome experiments in style) with a pious celebration of social protest in favor of Negroes, Jews, children of adulterous mothers, paraplegics, Hungarians—whatever is thoroughly unexceptionable and, of course, *up to date*; for such books must compete with the daily newspaper. In these works, a new, urban, professional, liberalized, and, I think, largely Jewish elite comes to terms with its own vague feelings of guilt at being so prosperous in a troubled world. The kind of people who learn all about their children from reading Gesell, who go to the Museum of Modern Art, who subscribe to *The Reporter*, who vote for Adlai Stevenson, also buy the novels of Budd Schulberg and Irwin Shaw to get the latest word on the "little people," with whom they sentimentally identify themselves.

Naturally enough, considering the strength of Jewishness in this group and the impact of Hitler on the whole newspaper-reading world, the first "little people" to be celebrated in the liberal novel were the "little Jews." Not only Jewish writers, but Jews and Gen-

tiles alike, discovered at once this new form of the novel and the new subject (so ignored in the 'thirties) of anti-Semitism. Arthur Miller's first novel *Focus*, Laura Z. Hobson's *Gentlemen's Agreement*, Mary Jane Ward's *The Professor's Umbrella*—there is a whole stream of such books mounting to a kind of flood-peak with John Hersey's *The Wall*. They are profoundly sentimental in theme and tone and are written in the slickly finished style proper to a literary no-man's land existing somewhere between Hollywood and Madison Avenue and blanketed with old copies of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, the *New Yorker* and the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*.

What is oddest about such fiction, however, is the way in which it is typically hoked-up; the books are never simply studies of anti-Semitism in action, they are studies of anti-Semitism with a gimmick. Miller, for instance, deals with a man who, though a Gentile, *looks* like a Jew when he puts on glasses, and is persecuted when his eyes fail. Mrs. Hobson's book is about a reporter who *pretends* he is a Jew and brings down upon himself the discrimination of anti-Semites. It is not only a certain middlebrow ideal of form which demands the gimmick, but a basic uncertainty which is aptly symbolized by such a tricky device. What, after all, *is* a Jew in this world where men are identified as Jews only by mistake, where the very word becomes merely an epithet arbitrarily applied? It is difficult to make a novel about anti-Semitism when one is not sure exactly what, beside being the butt of anti-Semites, makes a man a Jew.

THERE ARE, to be sure, occasional portraits of real Jews beside the imaginary ones; but the former are such monsters of humility and gentleness and endurance and piety that it

is impossible to believe in them. Such protagonists are no more real than the happy endings which await them: reconciliations in an atmosphere of goodwill even less credible than the atmosphere of exaggerated hostility with which such fables typically begin. The pattern is set once and for all in a story by Irwin Shaw called "Act of Faith," in which a young man, scared by his father's accounts of anti-Semitism at home, decides to keep as insurance a *Luger* he has picked up on the battlefield. He thinks, however, of his war-time buddies, "of all the drinks they had had together, and the long marches together, and all the girls they had gone out with together" and decides to sell the pistol after all. "Forget it," he says finally, "what could I use it for in America?" What begins as a political problem (touched with hysteria) is solved as a sentimental one (touched with politics).

From a story of anti-Semitism to one of the war is an easy jump; indeed, the liberal war novel is only one more species of the high-minded literature of social reform: a sub-variety, in the hands of Jewish writers in particular, of the novel of anti-Semitism. Shaw's *The Young Lions* is the prime example of the genre, anticipations of which we have already noticed in Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*. In a fundamental sense, there is nothing new in such novels; they do not change the protest form of the war-book invented just after World War I; but the method has been perfected: the tone of superficial realism set by unflinching descriptions of death, rape and the other usual calamities of combat; the rejection of certain more obvious stereotypes of the enemy, and the exploitation of others: the reactionary American General, for instance, but especially the "representative platoon," with the Jewish Sad Sack to help make up its roster.

One raised entirely on such literature and the movies based on their clichés would believe the United States Army to be carefully organized so that each platoon contains a pure, sentimental sample of the "little people" at war: a cocky, slight Italian, a Brooklyn Jew, a raw-boned, blonde farmboy etc. Certainly, no such group would dare set off without its Jew, the kind of understanding victim, who, in the recent liberaloid film *Attack*, is portrayed as reciting *Kaddish* for a Catholic thug who dies while trying to reach a gun and kill (naturally!) an evil officer.

Shaw's Jew is Noah Ackerman, a self-educated intellectual, hated at first by his buddies in part because a copy of James Joyce is found in his footlocker, but later much admired after offering to fight the six or eight toughest men in his platoon. In him, we meet the stereotyped anti-stereotype of the Jew: since the old stereotype makes the Jew a coward, he is brave; since it makes the Jew a war-resister, he is a combat hero; since it makes the Jew an enemy of personal violence, he is (for quite high-minded reasons) dedicated to it. What Hemingway had satirized as over-compensation in Robert Cohn is here glorified.

There are, however, two other major characters in *The Young Lions* beside the Jew as Fighting Sad Sack: the anti-stereotype stereotyped Nazi, and an enlightened, sensitive American who has passed from Broadway to the front and is the eye of the book. The Nazi is permitted to kill the Jew, but Michael Whiteacre, the emissary from the world of Popular Culture, kills the Nazi. This is all quite satisfactory to the readers; for Michael is clearly intended to be their representative in the action: a projection of the mind for which Shaw is writing, the social group for which he speaks.

His work fulfills the ideal proposed

to himself by the bureaucratized intellectual dreaming of what he would do if released by Hollywood or the T.V. network. *The Young Lions* is, one remembers, the book which the gigolo-scriptwriter in *Sunset Boulevard* (and presumably the scriptwriter behind him) reads in his spare time. Budd Schulberg is, of course, another novelist who speaks for the same audience; and his *What Makes Sammy Run?* is as appropriate a representation of the Hollywood novel on the middlebrow level as *The Young Lions* is of the war novel (or, indeed, as Schulberg's own *On the Waterfront* of the liberaloid labor story).

WHEN Schulberg's earlier book appeared, there was much pointless and confusing comment on the presumably anti-Semitic implications of his portrayal of Sammy Glick; as if this were the first portrait of an evil Jew to have appeared in American literature. In the midst of such properly middlebrow polemics, most readers failed to notice the more unforgivable travesties of Jews in Schulberg's noble scriptwriters, who read Silone's *Fontamara* in their spare moments, and fought the good fight for the Screenwriters' Guild despite blacklisting and redbaiting.

Schulberg's novel, like all sentimental melodramas, splits into opposing symbolic characters what in fact exists in one contradictory soul. Once understood in this light, the book may be read as a portrait of the artist as a Hollywood employee: that is, a writer like Schulberg (and Shaw) is in part the noble Jewish supporter of the Loy-alists and trade-unionism, but in part, too, Sammy Glick, the poor boy on the make. They, too, are sons of a first generation of immigrants which had destroyed itself for their sake in a strange world; they, too, are eager to

be heard, to be effective, to be successful—and to break out of the trap of a stereotyped Jewishness without money. They are more complicated men, to be sure, than Sammy Glick; but then everyone is: even Herman Wouk.

Wouk's work does, however, possess a certain importance for revealing on a less sophisticated level ambitions analogous to those which inform *What Makes Sammy Run?* and *The Young Lions*. If Shaw and Schulberg can be said to speak for the mass entertainers with yearnings to transcend their world, Wouk can be understood as representing the ad writers and gag writers who are convinced that the same slick techniques by which they earn their livings can do justice to certain modest liberal values, and that those values are compatible with the suburban lives they lead. Turning from Shaw and Schulberg to Wouk, one notices certain differences: less shock, fewer dirty words, less stylistic pretension. His is a world that cries "Keep it clean!" and the one thing that that world finds dirtier than four-letter words is high-brow art.

A common sentimentality, however, binds them together and a common store of stock "little people." Greenwald, the Jew of Wouk's war novel, *The Caine Mutiny*, is blood-brother to the Ackerman of Shaw's *The Young Lions*: both are Jews who face up to Gentile versions of courage and honor which exclude them, not by challenging those codes but by aping them; both attempt to prove, despite the handicaps of a Jewish physique and a long tradition of non-violence, that they can outdrink and outfight any goy. But Greenwald has adapted to the world that surrounds him even more shamelessly than Ackerman, having neither a taste for James Joyce nor a principled distrust of the armed forces. The villainous intellectual who does is

called Keefer, and is clearly (thank God!) not a Jew.

The reconciliation which Wouk demands goes far beyond the embracing of one's fellow yahoos in battle camaraderie as advocated by Shaw. It requires embracing the whole military, the whole social order in all its smug security, because, as Greenwald reminds especially his Jewish readers, it was Captain Queeg who kept mama out of the Nazis' soap-dish. "Captain Queeg, yes, even Queeg and a lot of sharper boys than any of us. Best men I've ever seen. You can't be good in the Army or Navy unless you're goddam good, though maybe not up on Proust and *Finnegans Wake* and all." *The Stars and Stripes Forever* blend with *A Yiddische Mamme*, as Gold had once blended the latter with the *International*—and the way is clear for Marjorie Morningstar.

Marjorie is, indeed, our new middlebrow muse, translated from Wouk's book to the cover of *Time* to the movies with scarcely a pause for breath: a portrait of accommodation as the young girl. That she is Jewish is the final touch: a tribute to the triumph of liberalism in the suburbs, the truce with anti-Semitism of the American middle-class, and the end of surly intransigence among the Jews. In the form of Noel Airman, Wouk has isolated all that is skeptical, anti-Philistine and indifferent to bourgeois values in the Jewish American tradition; and Airman he has made his villain. With him he identifies everything that stands between the Jew and social acceptance, the novelist and popularity; with Marjorie he identifies all that makes the Jew acceptable and the Jewish novelist a best-seller. It is one of the melodramatic fissions like the one we have noticed in Shaw and Schulberg; though this time the author isolates and casts out of himself symbolically not his

greed for success but all that stands between him and that success.

What is truly strange is not that Marjorie should seem representative to the bourgeois Jewish community, but that she should also strike the American community at large as a satisfactory image. Yet it is comprehensible in the end that the enlightened American *allrightnick*, Gentile or Jew, should find in the suburban Jewish housewife the proper symbol of interfaith "tolerance," the vision of unity in diversity possible where no one any longer believes in anything but the hundred-percent Americanism of just believing.

THIS is not yet, however, a total picture of the middlebrow novel as written by the Jewish American writer. If Shaw defines the middle of the middle, and Wouk its lower limits, it is J. D. Salinger who indicates its upper reaches. Though Salinger has written always for the circle of middlebrow periodicals that includes *Good Housekeeping* and the *New Yorker*, he has maneuvered constantly (though at first almost secretly) to break through the limits of that circle. He has piously acknowledged in his stories the standard ritual topics of the enlightened bourgeoisie: the War and anti-Semitism; but he has been concerned underneath with only a single obsessive theme: the approach to madness and the deliverance from it, usually by the intervention of a child. His "little people" are often quite literally little, usually small girls; and his favorite protagonists are under twenty, their typical crisis the last pre-adult decision of deciding whether or not to remain in school.

The themes that find full expression in *Catcher in the Rye* are tried early in short magazine fiction. In "A Girl I Know," there first appears the familiar, six-foot two, blackhaired boy,

cast out of school; though in this case he is eighteen, has been expelled from college, and finds his way to Austria where he becomes involved in a brief, utterly innocent love affair with a Jewish girl, who can speak no more English than he can German. The War separates them and he returns to Europe to find her dead, killed by the Nazis. In the much-reprinted "For Esme with Love and Squalor" the other half of the obsessive fable is sketched in: the story of a man redeemed from a combat breakdown by a gift from an orphaned, twelve-year-old, upper-class girl, with whom he has had a brief tea-table conversation in England.

In *Catcher in the Rye*, the black-haired boy on the lam from school and the man threatened with insanity are joined together; the savior becomes the little sister—and the sentimental-political background is sloughed away in favor of a discreetly hinted-at world of religious implications. One has the sense that Salinger is making a real bid to break out of the trap of middlebrow "understanding" into the realm of the tragic; but the attempt fails. It is impossible to believe in Holden Caulfield finally, for he is too unreal, a creature of tricks of style, set against an utterly unconvincing family background. One knows that he is intended to represent a holy innocent against whom the rest of the world is measured: a kind of prep-school, upper-income-bracket Huckleberry Finn, who cannot quite light out for the Territory but is redeemed by a little girl in a climax essentially sentimental; yet he ends as the prep-school boy's dream of himself, a slickly amusing model imitated by a hundred seventeen-year-olds in a score of secondary-school magazines from coast to coast.

In "Zooey," a recent novella published in the *New Yorker*, Salinger seems to me to have recast his story,

so often unsuccessfully attempted, in much more convincing form. If "Zooey" moves us where *Catcher in the Rye* merely amuses, it is because for once the madness of the theme is allowed to break up the slickness of the style; and the family tragedy which is Salinger's essential theme is uncontaminated by required subject matter, erotic or political, essentially alien to him. The only romance to which he really responds is the family romance: Orestes saved from the furies by Electra (though this time he has reversed the roles); and he has brought his myth in all purity home, to his own Manhattan and to the Jewishness with which he has had so much trouble coming to terms. His protagonists may find their final peace in a religious revelation compounded of Zen Buddhism and Christian mysticism; but they begin at least in a Jewish milieu (half-Jewish only, he insists) of quiz-kids and memories of the Pantages circuit. Salinger seems to me by all odds the most interesting of the middlebrow writers, torn between a professional knowledge of what is permitted the entertainer and a desire to surrender all striving to the attainment of a mystic's peace. The assertion at the end of "Zooey" that the Fat Lady of the middling audience is "Christ Himself. Christ Himself, buddy!" seems to me one of the wackiest and most winning attempts to compromise these contradictory impulses.

The second major direction of recent fiction, what I have called earlier the Jacobin protest, is a last attempt to maintain the snobbism of the highbrow in a world which undercuts his existence. It is associated, in its Jewish manifestations at least, with *Partisan Review* and the publications that flank it: *Commentary*, *Encounter* and the *New Leader*, on the one hand; *Kenyon Review*, *Sewanee Review* and certain other literary quarterlies, on the other.

It is not especially relevant from our point of view that *Partisan* was originally political in nature, pledged to retaining the purity of Marxism at a time when the official Communist movement was in retreat toward Popular Front-ism; what is important is that it was pledged also to maintain against the bourgeoisie the alliance of high art and radical thinking.

By the 1950's as a matter of fact, Marxism had become a memory, a special condition of their youth, to most of *Partisan Review's* remaining collaborators; respectability crept inexorably in upon it. At various points, indeed, certain super-Jacobins left the magazine's pages in despair. Not the least interesting of these is Paul Goodman, who wanted to maintain an uncompromised allegiance to pure bohemianism and non-accommodation. He is at present a lay analyst, influenced in his practice by the teachings of Wilhelm Reich; and his concern with depth-psychology helps shape his fiction, which is also based in part on the techniques of Kafka and the devices of Yiddish folk humor.

Yet even those who remain and have most blatantly accommodated to the world around them still share something with further dissenters like Goodman, something which separates them clearly from the middlebrow writers we have been discussing. What is it that they share beneath all their differences? I have called it earlier the snobbism of the highbrow; and their enemies are likely to label it "negativism." Perhaps it is best thought of as a sort of vestigial, spiritual Trotskyism: an obligation to the attitudes of dissent which survives the ideological grounds for dissent. It arises in any case from their early conditioning in endless polemics on Marxian theory and their exposure from adolescence on to Freudian concepts; and makes them more closely

kin in certain ways to European intellectuals than to more traditional American writers.

Perhaps most important of all is the fact that such writers possess in common a brand of experience which is rich and suggestive. They are urban; they are second-generation Americans; they are men and women whose adolescence and early youth came between the Great Wars, was influenced by the Civil War in Spain and haunted by the Depression; they remain strangers in the world of prosperity in which they now, quite comfortably, live. They are joined to each other and separated from the rest of their generation by the experience of having accepted and rejected Communism.

They are, finally, typically Jewish: secularized, uncertain Jews in most cases to be sure; but in all cases possessed by the ghosts of their Jewish past; and they continue to wrestle with the lay messianism which was the gift of that past to them. Their peculiar relationship to their Jewishness emphasizes their sense of alienation (it is a favorite word of theirs, very annoying but inescapable), and protects them against the Wouk-Shaw-Schulberg kind of simple-minded, liberal-middlebrow accommodation.

YET THE blessing which has fallen upon Wouk has also been bestowed (even more fantastically) upon *Partisan Review*. For better or for worse, the time has come when each cultural level in America looks to some Jewish-sponsored myth for a justification of its existence and its dreams; for some the Superman of the comics, for some the moralistic robots of Isaac Asimov, for some Marjorie Morningstar, for some images of urban alienation out of the pages of *Partisan Review*. Certainly, that magazine despite the tininess of its actual subscription list exercises

at home and abroad a fantastic influence. If the concept of the highbrow has become for most Americans associated with the notion of the urban, Jewish, former Communist, this is in part the work of *Partisan Review*.

Certainly, as far as literature is concerned, it has introduced over the past fifteen years a group of writers rivalled in their variety and the richness of their common themes only by the southern group which includes Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers etc. Among them are writers like Delmore Schwartz, who has not yet produced a novel, but who has, in the short stories collected in *The World Is a Wedding*, managed to evoke the tone and texture of second generation life in America better than anyone I know. To render an undramatized sense of grey people in grey cities, speaking to each other in grey voices and grey words, he has evolved a desperately flat style, which, when it does not succeed, can be boring beyond belief; but which, when it works, carries an unparalleled conviction. There are further the *Partisan Review* adapters of Kafka, in particular Isaac Rosenfeld, who made in his short stories something new and disturbing of Kafkaesque ambiguity and grotesque humor; and who pushed forward the possibilities of Kafkaesque form, the symbolic statement neither quite essay nor quite story. There is, finally, Bernard Malamud, currently the *Partisan* Fellow in fiction, more metaphysical than most of his colleagues and richly inventive as they seldom are, but produced by the same milieu, the same vestiges of urban Jewishness. In his second novel, *The Assistant*, he has dared a full-scale Jewish theme, opening up dazzling new possibilities by setting back on its feet again the conversion story turned upside-down by the Marxists after Mike Gold.

Malamud's meaning seems to me to

be just now defining itself and to belong to what lies ahead, unlike that of the two major figures of the last decade to whom I now come. The first is Lionel Trilling, who is to me an endlessly fascinating case, though finally, I fear, a disappointing one. Indeed, the clue to his fascination lies in the last-minute failure of what is a complex and subtle sensibility; in the fact that as a fictionist, he doesn't quite work. Yet he was willing to attempt in *The Middle of the Journey* the novel which some writer of his kind must someday achieve: the story of the allure of Communism and of the disillusion with it. Norman Mailer has tried his hand at it, to be sure, but without having quite lived through the experience, and Isaac Rosenfeld has explored it a little obliquely in one short story; while Leslie Fiedler has endlessly circled around it in his shorter fiction. Only Trilling has made the full-scale attempt; and it is perhaps a certain air of schematism in his approach, a sense of his having reached this item on a list of Important Things to be Done, which mars the book.

The events of the novel, at any rate, finally remain unconvincing, both on the symbolic level (despite their relationship to the central experience of a generation) and on the literal one (despite their resemblance to the newspaper story of Hiss and Chambers); because they come to us refracted through the mind of a singularly unconvincing protagonist, a kind of cross between Matthew Arnold and E. M. Forster, caught at the moment of his entry into middle age and at the point of recovery from a wasting disease. He is both genteel and Gentile, this Laskell, through whom the working class characters of the book become caricatures and its passion merely literary—not Trilling, of course, but a mask Trilling prefers to assume, a mask of the bourg-

eois academic who is beyond Judaism as he is beyond the clichés of middle-brow liberalism. I do not know whether Trilling lacks vitality because of his failure to tap his own Jewish sources, or whether he fails to tap those sources because of an initial lack of vitality; but somewhere here *thé* is a clue to his failure, a failure whose outward symbol is the lack of Jewish major protagonists in a novel by a Jew about an experience deeply rooted in Jewish life.

He is much more successful in certain short stories, in "Of This Time, of That Place" and "The Other Margaret," where he can concentrate on a narrower world of university-oriented, genteel, New York, middle-class culture, in which Jewishness survives chiefly as what used to be called "ethical culture," a kind of diffuse moral concern. When he enters the larger world of the novel and confronts in particular the absurdity essential to the Communist experience in America, he is defeated by the very talents which make him so much at home in the world of late nineteenth century British fiction.

SAUL BELLOW is quite another matter. The author of *The Dangling Man*, *The Victim*, *The Adventures of Augie March* and a recent collection of shorter fiction called *Seize the Day*, he is already an established writer; although in the annoying fashion of American journalism (he is after all younger than Faulkner or Hemingway) he is still referred to as a "young novelist." Looking at the whole body of his work, one has the sense of a creative restlessness, an adventurousness, which distinguish him quite sharply from such other established fictionists as Trilling, on the one hand, or Irwin Shaw, on the other. Even such younger, dissident middle-brows as Herbert Gold seem beside him to lack technical courage and real commitment.

Bellow can, on occasion, mute his style as he has done in *The Victim* and in the novella which gives his most recent collection its name; but even under wraps, his language has a kind of nervous life, a tough resiliency unequalled by any other American Jewish writer of the moment. Perhaps the fact that Yiddish was his first language has something to do with the matter; but when he unleashes his fancy and permits himself a kind of rich, crazy poetry based on the juxtaposition of high language and low, elegance and slang, I am reminded of *Moby Dick*. The dialogue of his books possesses a special vitality; he can report a passage of conversation about ideas which leaves one feeling that his characters have exchanged more than words, have really touched each other as with a blow or a kiss.

In the body of his work, the ideas of the *Partisan Review* group (it does not matter how far he thinks he has left them behind) come fully alive in literature for the first time; they exist, that is to say, as they existed at their best in the minds of the men who held them; for those men at their best *lived* such ideas and did not merely believe them. Not only does Bellow have a style more vigorous than that of Trilling; but he moves in a world which is larger and richer and more disorderly and delightful—a world which he calls most often Chicago, though it is the externalization of fancy as well as memory. Implicit from his beginnings is the impulse toward the picaresque, which broke free finally in the sprawling, episodic, shapelessness of *Augie March*—whose very formless form protests the attempt to impose tight, aesthetic patterns upon a world whose essence is chaos.

Bellow is, not unexpectedly in an age when writers in general have entered the university and Jews in par-

ticular have found a home there, a teacher like Trilling. The Jim Tully ideal of the author-bum, still played at by novelists like Nelson Algren, has never had much appeal for the Jewish writer in America; but though Bellow rejects the mask of the hobo bard, he does not assume that of the cultured humanist. His myth of himself is not that of the morally discriminating bourgeois at home over cocktails; but of the lonely city dweller moving among boarding houses and cheap hotels, shabby restaurants and grey city streets in the heat of midsummer. The typical Bellow protagonist is the man whose wife has left him or has gone off to her mother's, the man returning to a house in disorder.

He is the person who, all amenities stripped away, feels himself stripped to his human essence. And the human essence, the naked fact of a man in a Bellow book is never an answer but always the question: what am I, after all? What, after all, is man? To which the unpromising answer is returned: you are what asks; go on asking. Here is Bellow's true center as well as what makes him central for all of us; he has realized not more clearly, perhaps, but more passionately than anyone what the collapse of the Proletarian Novel really meant: not the disappearance only of a way of writing, never very fruitful in any case, but also the dissolution of the last widely shared definition of man—as victim or beneficiary of the social order.

Because Bellow does not subscribe to the liberal's illusion that the definition of the human in social terms is still viable; because he knows that Man, in the old sense, is dead—he is able to redeem all the typical books of the middlebrow-liberal canon. *The Dangling Man* is his book about the war; *The Victim*, his novel of anti-Semitism;

Augie March, his examination of the perils of success; *Seize the Day*, his fable of failure in a world of prosperity—his own *Death of a Salesman*. But in each, ambiguity has replaced sentimentality, the tragic or the joyous displaced self-congratulation and self-conscious piety. The Jew and the anti-Semite, the machiavellian and the *shlemiel* come alike to the same revelation.

It is because he manages to exact from the most unpromising material the stubborn vision of lonely man in a world which no longer provides his definition, that Saul Bellow is able at last to create the most satisfactory character ever projected by a Jewish writer in America: Augie March. With the book itself, shrill, repetitious, in spots hysterically euphoric, I have certain quarrels; with Augie, none. He is an image of man at once totally Jewish, the descendant of the *schlemiels* of Fuchs and Nathanael West, and absolutely American—the latest avatar of Huckleberry Finn. In him, there is blended in perfect irony those twin, incompatible American beliefs: that the answer is just over the next horizon, and that there is no answer at all.

It is, I think, the final commentary on our age and on the place the Jew occupies in its imagination, that Huck Finn, when he returns to our literature not as an item of nostalgia but as an immortal archetype, returns without his overalls, his fishing pole and his freckles, as a Chicago kid making his way among small-time Jewish machiavellians. More was needed, however, than the age; the moment demanded a Jewish hero, perhaps, but hesitated indifferently between Augie March and Marjorie Morningstar. What was demanded was the talent and devotion and conviction which belong particularly to Bellow, and the rich, complicated milieu out of which he has emerged.

Say Nothing of the Dead

By EMANUEL LITVINOFF

COMING back was worse, much worse than Martin Stone had anticipated. When he got into the boat train at Victoria, his arms stuffed with English newspapers and periodicals, the usual drizzle falling from the grimy London sky, he'd told himself that this was just a business trip: he wasn't going to feel anything about it, it would probably bore him. And of course, it did—right down to the coast, across the English Channel to the Hook, and during the long, monotonous journey through the damp flat countryside of Holland. The border crept up on them so unobtrusively he hadn't noticed it until a German policeman came into the train compartment and asked for passports. Half dozing, he felt in his pocket for his wallet. Then he became aware of the official's hard, grey, searching eyes subjecting him to a professional scrutiny from under the hooded peak of his cap. His carefully sustained indifference crumpled at once. *So they still look at a Jew like that*, he thought with a sudden flood of hatred.

The policeman glanced at the passport photograph and personal details and said: "*Sind Sie in Berlin geboren?*"

The innuendo seemed obvious to Martin: "You may carry a British passport, but to us you're just a Jew." He stared at the German as if he were a lump of filth. "Yes, I was *born* in Berlin," he replied in English, deliberately emphasizing his cultured accent.

The policeman looked at him again, shrewdly, stamped his passport and left with a curt, stiff bow. Martin avoided the eyes of his fellow-travelers. His heart was beating unevenly. Outside the flat fields spun by, identical with those on the other side of the border. But he could no longer look at them with indifference: they were Germany.

The effect of this first encounter with a German official remained with him for hours. During the time he spent in Hamburg waiting for the plane to Berlin, he walked around, shrinking from the casual contact of passers-by as though they were disease carriers, and searching for signs of abnormality in their faces. People with a history like theirs should be ugly, but they seemed ordinary, as commonplace as any crowd in any

"Say Nothing of the Dead" is the opening chapter of a novel in progress dealing with the reactions of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany who have occasion to return to the land that has rejected them. EMANUEL LITVINOFF last appeared in our Winter, 1957 issue with a monograph on "Koestler and His Generation."

city. God had not punished them, he reflected resentfully, ignoring the sight of a war-mutilated cripple selling newspapers in case he should feel pity and receive even that dumb reproach. Yet by the time he arrived at Tempelhof airport and Hugo drove him into the glittering, night-loving city, the feeling already began to pass, leaving him weak and calm as if a fever had burned out in his blood.

Now he gazed out of the car at the half-familiar streets and the crowd faces swimming by in an electric blue haze with an indifference that could not merely be explained by tiredness. It doesn't matter to me any more; it was only the shock of arrival that affected me, stirring the sediment of childhood, he thought hopefully. Even if I was born in Berlin, England made me—the first difficult years at school, the wintry soccer afternoons, evacuation with a hundred other boys in school blazers to the villages of Cheshire; and, gradually, the words coming sweetly off the tongue, not mutilated and foreign anymore. After two years in barrack rooms on National Service he felt at least as English as any Welshman.

Hugo drove fast and recklessly, biting hard on a long cigar. He manipulated the steering wheel with one hand and settled his heavy body more comfortably in the driving seat. "Does it feel good to come home?" he asked mockingly.

The car swerved to avoid a scurrying pedestrian. "You bloody Nazi!" Hugo yelled as if it were a great joke. "Berlin is a form of insanity—and it's contagious. All you need do is change your name back to Silberstein and you can practically take up where you left off."

"I was nine when I left off."

"We'll see. It gets you, you know. Look at me, I came in 1952 and I'm still here."

Martin could have pointed out the obvious differences between them. When Hugo fled from Germany to Vienna in 1934 he'd been almost the same age as Martin was now, and according to all accounts one of the brightest young talents in Berlin. Fifteen years in England hadn't made him less German, although, God knows, it was impossible to understand how he could bear to come back here to live.

WHAT would you like to do tonight? Eat? Drink? Dance? See a play? There are tourist attractions, if you want that sort of thing. Not quite Hamburg Reeperbahn standards, I'm afraid. . . . Or perhaps you'd prefer a peep behind the Curtain?" Hugo sounded like a bored pimp offering a choice of commonplace vices.

"I think I'd prefer some sleep," Martin said. "It's been a long journey."

Hugo stuffed his cigar into the ashtray peevishly. "The trouble with you is you've got no curiosity," he complained. He seemed to interpret the refusal as a personal affront, as if he'd specially arranged the series of entertainments as a private show for his guest. "Anyway, I hope you've got enough energy to have a drink before you retire."

Suddenly they turned out of a gloomy side-street into an explosion of competing neon-lights. Shop fronts glittered like fake diamonds and

a dazzling necklace of bright amber was strung overhead in an apparently endless vista. "The Kurfürstendamm," Hugo explained laconically. "Don't let it fool you. It's practically all front."

Martin stared somberly at the parade of well-dressed people walking the pavements and the steady flow of shiny automobiles. This was a road he remembered well. It had become garish, a vulgar advertisement, but it had not changed too much. "So this is the Kurfürstendamm," he said. Hugo's big square hand patted his knee. "It touches a chord, eh?" he asked, smiling sardonically.

A few hundred yards down the road they stopped. Picked out in glowing emerald green filament was the name Hugo Krantz. Unlike many of its neighbors, it did not flicker on and off but burned with a challenging steadiness. "*Içi Paris*," Hugo said, waving at the elegant dresses in the windows and the pavement showcase in which crystal bottles of perfume revolved on pads of black velvet. "I live upstairs."

Some women stood in front of the shop clutching the arms of reluctant escorts and admiring its wares. "It makes their tongues hang out," Hugo whispered gleefully. "But only a couple of hundred females in Berlin can afford my prices."

A private elevator brought them to a penthouse that appeared to be designed with a reckless disregard for money. Hugo waved Martin to a deep chair by the curved window that formed a glass wall along one side of the room. He turned a switch on the side of his desk and filled the place with soft music, then strolled over to the cocktail bar in the corner. "Try a German cognac," he suggested, "it won't disappoint you."

The pattern on the carpet was formed of the monogram HK. On the walls were a Modigliani, a Soutine, a Chagall, some Ben Shahn and Josef Hermans, and other pictures by lesser known painters, a selection that seemed dictated less by taste than by sentiment, for most of them seemed to be Jews. A black terrazzo fireplace was occupied by a Henry Moore style figurine which led the eye through a series of rather feminine perspectives to a slender staircase ascending to the upper apartments.

Hugo brought the drinks over and sat down, watching Martin intently for his reactions. "Well, do you approve?" he asked eagerly, as if seeking reassurance from an expert.

"It seems to have everything one could want — even the view." Martin nodded down at the Kurfürstendamm. The lights gleamed richly below, mellowed by distance. Little clockwork cars whirled along the roadway and tiny marionette figures moved predictably along the sidewalks.

"It's not bad. It amuses me. Looked at in a certain way you could call it my private flea circus." Hugo smiled grimly. "You may not see the joke. On one occasion in the cellars of the Gestapo they sprayed me with vermin killer."

"You don't seem to love your neighbors." *

"Have a cigar," Hugo said, pushing over a silver box. He lit one himself and blew the smoke reflectively. "One in every five people down

there was a Nazi of some kind. I like the other four. The problem is to be sure that those you like are the right ones."

"And how do you find out?"

"That's the trouble. Sometimes you know, sometimes you don't. One lives on one's nerves. It gives an edge to human relationships."

THE THIN, bitter voice did not belong to the moneyed assurance of the apartment, nor to Hugo's obese body and the crumpled elegance of his expensive clothes. It turned the sentimental music flowing like warm, scented air through the room into a lie. What was true was the pain of the past, the pain of the young man which now spoke through the blurred middle-aged mask of his flesh. Hugo said: "You're alive here in the way you're alive in an air raid. You live with a mistrust of the existence of tomorrow." Abruptly he turned the conversation away from himself. "Your father was rich. I begged him dozens of times to put in a restitution claim, but all I ever got from him was a hysterical sermon on German blood money. What made him change his mind?"

"He didn't," said Martin. "Money doesn't mean anything to him any more. It's a habit he's lost."

He thought of the old sick man alone in their furnished flat in Swiss Cottage, frugally cutting his cigarettes in half to make them last longer and combing through emigré news sheets to read the obituaries of his friends. Only hatred of everything German sustained him, hatred of all that he had once loved immoderately. By hating Germany he committed his own kind of suicide.

"We had what passes with us for a difference of opinion," Martin went on with a wry smile. "I didn't see why the Germans should hold on to our property without giving us compensation. I'm prepared to wash the blood off the money before I use it. A percentage for Jewish orphans, or free bockwurst for elderly refugees." He omitted to say that his father didn't even know he'd come to Germany; that he had told the old man he was traveling to Switzerland for his firm.

Hugo refilled their glasses from the brandy decanter. "I like your taste in philanthropy," he commented dryly. "Tomorrow I'll have a word with my lawyer. For five percent he'll push your claim through in no time. Anyway, here's to all bockwurst philanthropists." He drained his glass in one swallow and immediately refilled it.

"Cheers," said Martin, watching his companion closely. Hugo probably drank a good deal. It would account for the reckless driving and that bellowing bravado that obviously concealed a deep insecurity. But what was he trying to do? Dull the memory of the wasted years? To do so, he'd have to annihilate his personality with alcohol.

A violin was plaintively playing a coy, sugary melody. Hugo got up and abruptly switched the sound off. But the silence, too, frayed at his nerves. He began talking aimlessly, gossip about Berlin, political scandal, theatre chat—but whatever he said scarcely disturbed the glassy surface of the silence. The ash from his cigar dropped unnoticed onto the front of his silk shirt.

"I suppose your father thinks I'm a rat," he said eventually, "coming back and settling here?"

Martin felt embarrassed. "We all thought it was something to do with Marion, particularly after the divorce."

"Oh Marion"—Hugo dismissed the suggestion impatiently. "We never really got on from the beginning. Marion's a first-class bitch. She only stayed married to me for appearance's sake. I suppose it suited us both." He pulled his chair closer to Martin. Behind the heavy horn-rimmed glasses his grey eyes appeared liquid and dilated. "Do you know what your father did for me, Martin? I was hardly twenty-two, just a promising juvenile lead. Then I wrote a satirical revue. Not a single producer would touch it. Your father read it and signed a blank check for the production. Spoliansky did the music, Weber the decor, I acted. It gave me the smartest reputation in Berlin overnight. And in those days Berlin wasn't the village it is today. There was more talent to the square mile than in Paris and London combined. I could write my name to any contract. I had a luxury flat overlooking the Tiergarten, an Italian sports car and an English butler."

He stubbed out his cigar savagely and continued: "It lasted less than two years, then the dog entered into its inheritance. I went to Vienna and started again. They chased me out. I went to Prague. When Chamberlain came to Munich, I knew it was time to move again."

MARTIN listened unwillingly. He had no desire for these confidences. The story was, in any case, not unfamiliar. But perhaps because they were sitting high above Berlin, looking down on the city almost as though it were a solid river flowing with history, he felt unable to break the flow of confessions.

"When I came to London, people used to ask me why I didn't go on writing or acting," Hugo said. "After all, refugees did make the transition. 'Look at Herbert Lom,' they used to say. 'Look at the Kordas. Look at Koestler.' I sat up night after night chain-smoking and writing comedies. In German they were funny enough to give an owl hysterics. English killed them. In the end I gave up trying. I couldn't afford to smoke so much."

Darkness seemed to have invaded the softly-lighted room and the noise of the city below had imperceptibly decreased. Martin's watch showed that it was past midnight. His tiredness had settled into a numb discomfort in his brain and a dry distaste for the unreal evening.

"When I married Marion everybody thought I was damn lucky. A penniless refugee getting the daughter of the biggest buttonmaker in England. Marriage was—for me—a kind of degrading servitude. I went into business and made money, but Marion got the credit for that. People envied me and despised me. In a sense, they were justified. Refugees are a disgusting lot. They can't help it, but neither can lice. Either they apologize for being alive or they parade their sores with the insolence of Oriental beggars."

The degeneration into self-pity that was characteristic of refugees, Martin reflected. He remembered Hugo's eighteenth century cottage

in Hampstead Village, which became something of a left-wing salon. And even if Hugo hadn't succeeded in writing a comedy for the English theatre, he had produced a clever, sardonic book on Central European socialism which got a good deal of attention and gave him the status of an expert. Money, friends and a reputation for witty scholarship: it didn't sound like the life of a louse.

"Of course, everybody came to my parties," Hugo went on, as if sensitive to the unspoken scepticism. "Why not? My income was larger than a Cabinet Minister's, and the hospitality was in keeping. I suppose I was one of the most tolerated refugees in exile, but I'd rather be here," he nodded towards the street below. "Even if some of those bastards down there think of me as a *verfluchter Jude*, I belong here."

"You've convinced me that I don't," Martin said. He stood up to go. The brandy had filled him with a melancholy fuzziness. He went close to the window and glanced toward the macabre ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche. Once in the remote past he had attended a service there with his father. He remembered it then as a huge ugly cathedral smelling of incense and decay, but his father had thought it beautiful. For a moment he tried to imagine what the old man might feel were he standing in this place at this time, but nothing came. Home-sick and inexpressibly lost, he turned back to the room.

"Don't bother to see me to Frau Goetz's," he said. "I'll get my bags out of the car and take a taxi."

"Certainly not. I promised I'd deliver you in person." Hugo got up reluctantly. I've talked too much, he told himself despondently. I must be lonelier than I think.

As they left the apartment he glanced slowly round before putting out the lights. Now it gave him no pleasure. It seemed transitional, a stage setting assembled for a polite social comedy which could be quickly dismantled leaving the stage empty and bare in readiness for another play. He switched on the darkness and closed the door.

Crowds were still parading along the Kurfürstendamm. The pavement cafes were thronged with coffee-drinkers. Snatches of music came intermittently from the beckoning doorways of beer-halls. Well-nourished men, their faces flushed with food and drink, escorted scented women to shiny cars that waited at the curbs opposite the restaurants. There was a singing of the flesh all down the golden mile of the renovated city, a boisterous brotherhood of good living; and no hint of the pestilential past.

"You have to admit," Hugo said, breathing the mild air deeply, "Berlin has a quality no other place in the world has got. Night here is like an injection of benzedrine." His spirits had suddenly lifted. "Let's go for a quick run around," he shouted, slapping Martin exuberantly on the back. "We'll get a lungful of this marvelous fresh air. The Germans don't deserve to have it all to themselves."

THEY headed out swiftly towards the suburbs. Martin lay back on the seat and let the coolness wash over his face. The car sped past big slabs of unlighted buildings and brief oases of brightness until, after

about fifteen minutes, the darkness began to intermingle with the branches of trees. For Martin there was a curious familiarity about the district through which they were now passing. The blurred impression suddenly came into focus.

"This is Dahlem, isn't it?" he said. "We're near the Botanical Gardens." It brought an unexpectedly vivid stab of nostalgia. He'd gone to school in this neighborhood. The sharp fresh smell of the Grunewald nearby evoked the memory of lakes, woods and country walks, recalling a pleasure he had almost forgotten, the long summer day of a childhood that was abruptly terminated.

Hugo slowed down the car and came to a halt. "I think you'll know this street," he said.

It was a calculated maneuver. Martin briefly struggled with his curiosity, then he got out of the car.

"I'd rather you didn't come with me," he said and walked rapidly away.

The appearance of the street was curiously changed, like a face which has had its nose reshaped. The corner where Willy Schneider's big brown house had stood was now occupied by a white block of flats striped with jutting balconies, and the large garden where as boys they had conducted military maneuvers among the fruit trees and sailed their toy fleets on the ornamental pond was now buried under a cliff of masonry.

Willy had been his best friend, a small, intense, masterful boy, a joyous and persuasive young liar who would commandeer the servants and post them as sentries all over the garden while he planned victorious campaigns against the Nazis from the fortress of his father's summer house. The Nazis, of course, had won. They caught up with him in Vienna, after the *Anschluss*, and he had disappeared with his family into some nameless mass-grave, or into the furnace of an incinerator. Now not a tree, nor a bush, nor a blade of grass that belonged to the small world of Willy Schneider survived here in Berlin, in the street where he was born.

Further down were the ruins of his own house. He walked heavily, as though moving against a stiff wind. A night-shift was working by artificial light on the unfleshed skeleton of a seven-story structure, but the grounds were still partly buried under a large mound of rubble. Martin clambered over a heap of sand and went in.

Nothing was recognizable among the fragments of stone and pieces of charred timber, but he felt that if he could dig into the ruins with his fingers, he would come across some splinter of the past, some tangible evidence that he once belonged here. It couldn't be possible to obliterate the life of a family so completely.

"Are you looking for something?" a gruff voice asked suspiciously.

"I used to live here." Martin spoke without reflection in German for the first time since he'd arrived in Berlin.

"It's a funny time to come visiting."

"Is it any of your business?"

The man lit a cigarette and tossed the match over his shoulder. "I'm the foreman on this job," he protested.

Martin picked up a piece of carved stone. "It could have come from the wall outside my room," he said in a flat conversational voice, handling the fragment as though it were a remote historical relic.

"It must have been a pretty big house before. How many floors did it have?"

The shape of the long, dim library with its French windows looking on to the garden came suddenly into his mind. From floor to ceiling the shelves were stacked with the history, the culture, the traditions of Germany. A marble Schiller held silent converse with a bronze Goethe across the polished oak floor. The library had cast a hushed spell over the rest of the house. For Martin home really began on the top floor where he and his sister, Lise, occupied adjoining rooms with a distant view of the Grunewald through the trees. And it was from the window of his sister's room that his mother fell the day Lise's belongings arrived in a small bundle through the post and they were officially notified of her death. They told people his mother had a heart attack. It was her last request. She would not bear the disgrace of suicide.

"It had three floors," Martin said. He dropped the lump of carved stone on the rubble and began walking away.

FRAU GOETZ opened the door to them in a flowered kimono, her face crumpled with sleep and wisps of dyed yellow hair escaping from under her night cap. She looked like a bedraggled canary and was terribly embarrassed at being brought out of bed.

"Hugo, why didn't you let me know you'd be so late?" she said reproachfully, clutching her kimono at the neck. "What will Mister Stone think of me like this?"

Martin was far too conscious of his own discomfort to think of her at all. The handles of his heavy suitcases were cutting into his fingers, but he managed a polite smile.

"You're so vain! You know bloody well you're a fascinating bitch," Hugo growled, grinning amiably. "Frau Goetz is an old friend," he explained. "She was quite the worst dancer on the Berlin stage." He sang in a flat unmelodious voice: "I flutter round your candle till I singe my wings . . ." "Remember that, my boulevard butterfly?"

The little woman seemed to enjoy the badinage and blushed like a young girl. "*Lieber Gott*, you are a wicked man!" she protested shrilly and tottered away on her high-heeled mules to lead them to Martin's room. She went round switching on several dim lights to show the place off to its full advantage.

"Thank you, its fine," Martin said, too tired to show more enthusiasm.

"You spik Sherman, Mister Stone?"

Hugo patted her rump patronizingly. "Better than you, *mein Liebchen*," he laughed. "You ought to recognize a Prussian gentleman when you see one." Humming cheerfully, he pulled the curtains apart to

see the view from the window. The room overlooked a partly-cleared bombed site and a long vista of ill-lit streets. On the other side of the road a dim red sign advertised a Spiel-Casino and beside it a portico faced with peeling stucco led into the courtyard of a half-ruined building.

"A nice, cosy desolation," Hugo commented to Martin. "This is the suicide room. When I stayed here in 1952 a man named Müller stepped off the window-sill. Couldn't stand any more of Frau Goetz's coffee." He wrenched open the door leading to the balcony and displaced a collection of rolled newspapers that had been stuffed into the frame to exclude drafts.

"*Ach! Gott im Himmel!*" Frau Goetz screamed, scurrying over to replace the papers.

At last Martin was left alone with his silence. He stretched out fully dressed on the wide divan-bed and smoked cigarette after cigarette as the experiences of the day revolved, fragmentary and disturbing, in his mind. Now, with his vitality at a low ebb, he was ready to confess that he'd been wrong when he told himself that Germany could no longer make him suffer. England, after all, had not cured him. All these years he had lived with an incomplete identity, a portion of his mind numbed by shock. Now it was painfully reviving. Here, at the sick heart of Europe, he could feel once more the poisons moving in the bloodstream, the familiar throbbing of the diseased night.

He lay for a long time deeply listening to all the small noises of darkness. Shadowy memories drifted through his mind like monstrous fish; and though he tossed from side to side to elude them he knew that it was impossible. He himself was the pursuer, trapped in his own flesh, his own imagination, preparing his own pitfalls. He lay with his eyes wide open, adrift in the inexhaustible night and, by imperceptible stages of transition, the past drew him unresisting into the depths of nightmare.

HE WAS sitting in back of the Mercedes. The late afternoon sky was heavy and overcast. His mother sat beside him, looking as she did on the day she died. Perhaps she always looked like that, he couldn't remember; but with an immediate clarity he recalled the perfume she used, an odor of crushed gardenias, the erect, soldierly back of the grey-uniformed chauffeur, the steady soporific vibration of the engine, and an insidious sense of foreboding, as if they were being secretly followed.

Both actor and spectator in the drama, he could see himself sitting stiffly on the edge of the seat, dressed in a tweed jacket and knickers, his eyes wide and childish, his hair neatly parted and plastered down, with one hand limp in his mother's lap. They were going out on a shopping expedition and had stopped at his father's office in the Friedrichstrasse where the family's business was situated. Now they were traveling along the Kurfürstendamm, the road looking like it did in old photographs, durable, mellow and prosperous. The five spires of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche, still intact, slowly heeled over as he squinted

up at them. He was immensely conscious of being an eight-year-old dwarf in a world of giants.

His mother turned her head very slowly toward him. Her voice was disembodied, an echo. "I'm going into Braun's to collect my dress," she said. "Wait for me. Afterward we'll have coffee in Kranzlers."

She tapped at the window and the chauffeur brought the car to a halt. Martin watched her cross the pavement and enter the dress shop, then he took a pocket knife out of his jacket and played with it silently. Suddenly he became aware of a curious alteration in the heartbeat of the city. Its throbbing diminished then accelerated as lorries loaded with Brownshirts raced along with horns blaring. The Brownshirts leaped onto the pavements and hurried into cafes, restaurants and shops. They reappeared, dragging frightened men in their wake, men of all ages and all sizes to whom fear had given a common expression so that they looked oddly like brothers.

His stomach fluttered. "Manfred, why are they taking those men away?" He spoke reluctantly, afraid of the answer.

The chauffeur opened a newspaper and held it spread out in front of his face. Across the top of the page in ugly black capitals was the heading: "*Reich Diplomat Ermordet.*" He kept his face hidden in the paper. "It was done by a Jew," he muttered.

The boy looked stealthily at the knife in his hand and wiped a red trace of rust on to his trousers. His limbs began to tremble violently and he was afraid he might disgrace himself by crying, or worse.

Two Nazis appeared in the doorway of a cafe struggling with a screaming middle-aged man who might once have been a prosperous businessman. Now his jacket was half-ripped from his body, the front of his trousers had been torn exposing his limp genitals, and his respectable face was distorted by an insane fear. "*Ich bin nicht schuldig!*" he screamed, "*Ich bin nicht schuldig!*" One of the Nazis punched him in the stomach and his body folded in half like a doll that had been bled of its sawdust. People turned away from the sight, shocked and ashamed, and a woman broke into hysterical laughter. A group of Brownshirts slouched by, their jackboots clattering. One of them peered into the car and grinned into the staring eyes of the boy. They were no longer the eyes of a child. "*Heil Hitler!*" he yelled.

The chauffeur kept the newspaper in front of his face. In the window of a restaurant a diner could be seen delicately wiping his lips with a napkin. The whole diffuse movement of the world entered the boy's nightmare—the darkening planet pricked with needles of light, the myriad people living their myriad ordinary lives, the peaceful growth of plants, the peaceful coming to birth, the dying of the old and the sick . . . but the world turning bad because of one man's pain on the pavement of a Berlin street.

Suddenly, as if he'd been guilty of a fatal oversight, he remembered his mother. Wrenching the car door open, he ran into the dressmaker's shop. The assistants were courteously preoccupied with their customers' needs, showing bolts of cloth, discussing styles, measuring ladies for dresses. Martin looked from one woman to another. All that confronted

him was a group of strangers and his own reflection staring back from a series of polished mirrors. His mother was not in the shop. He stood there and died. . . .

Over the years he died that particular death many times, the dream always ending before his mother's return from the fitting room where she had been hiding. His imagination never granted him the mercy of that reprieve. It left the small boy staring with dry-eyed horror at his lonely reflection until he drowned in a slumber too profound for dreams.

As the last flicker of consciousness was extinguished he knew that this time it would be different. When he opened his eyes again it would not be to the cockney voice of the milkman singing among the clattering bottles, the muted growl of traffic along Finchley Road and the folded English newspaper thrust through the letter-box. He would not join the taciturn morning crowds, with their ordinary, kindly, incurious English faces, and arrive at the office, where he worked as an accountant, to find his secretary immersed in the mild insanities of her favorite women's weekly and already talking about brewing tea.

This time he would wake in Germany.

SOMEONE was playing Mozart repetitively in an adjoining room. Dusty shafts of sunlight already penetrated the thick olive-green curtains and he got up, surprised to find himself still full dressed. It was not late, still wanting some minutes to nine, but as he pulled open the curtains the tide of the day's activities seemed well-advanced. Leather-jacketed men cycled briskly through the streets, some towing small carts laden with goods; the ubiquitous lorries filled with rubble rolled in procession to the great dumps in the old city center, now a wasteland between the Western and Eastern sectors; women were already returning from the markets with heavy shopping baskets, and the sound of children reciting lessons came from a nearby school.

The night had not refreshed him. His body felt stale and the taste of yesterday was thick and dry on his tongue. Pleasantly anticipating a hot bath and a change of linen, he began to unpack his cases, distracted by the unfamiliar noises in the apartment which, by their insistent intimacy, gave him the feeling that he was unwillingly becoming involved in the life of a family of strangers.

The pianist had stopped practicing Mozart and now seemed to be performing a complicated experiment with a tuning instrument from which he produced a series of high, bell-like notes. The telephone rang several times, then followed muffled, semi-intelligible conversations. A woman's voice, probably Frau Goetz's, could be heard volubly amidst the clatter of coffee cups.

There was a knock at the door and a tall, emaciated man, elegantly clad in a boldly striped yellow and black dressing gown, entered and introduced himself as the occupant of the next room, Klaus Richter. He was about thirty-five, with a high bald crown fringed by fluffy fair hair. An actor, he volunteered with a hint of a bow, gesturing with a well-kept hand that displayed a large cut emerald on its fourth finger.

"Are you the person who plays the piano?" Martin asked when he had completed his own introduction.

"Ah! that is our music professor, Hokoyama. A Japanese specialist in Mozart. Charming, don't you agree?" Herr Richter smiled a trifle grimly. Perhaps Mozart had become a monotonous pleasure. "I myself do not perform on an instrument," he continued in a deep voice that suggested he was no mean performer on the most flexible musical instrument of all.

He explained that he'd come on a social errand for Frau Goetz. Apparently it was a tradition of the establishment that new guests took coffee with her on the morning after their arrival, or at the first suitable occasion.

With the same inflexible politeness with which the invitation was tendered, Martin made his apologies: he was planning to have a bath just then but he would be happy to take advantage of the invitation some other time.

Herr Richter smiled pityingly. "Unfortunately between 8:30 and 9:30 the bathroom is always occupied by Herr Goldberg," he said. Excessively solemn, he beckoned Martin into the corridor and put his finger to his lips. A loud sound of gargling came from the bathroom, followed by a distinct belch and the noise of someone trumpeting into a handkerchief. Herr Goldberg seemed to be clearing all his orifices at the same time.

"Surely he doesn't have to take a whole hour," Martin protested mildly.

"One must assume that his toilet is rather elaborate. You might as well join us for breakfast."

FRAU GOETZ was already seated behind the coffee pot in the sitting room which was crowded with old-fashioned mahogany furniture and an incongruous assemblage of objects that included primitive African carvings, Christian religious objects, night-club posters, nineteenth century oleographs and brass candelabra that looked like Birmingham Oriental. In the daylight she was a delicate blue-eyed doll, slightly faded and withered in appearance as if she had aged on a neglected shelf of some toy-shop. Her dyed yellow hair was piled in a Gothic tower on top of her head, creating a startling effect of elongation, as though her skinny neck and small face had at some stage been stretched in an attempt to separate them from the rest of her body. She was heavily and expertly painted.

"Ah, Mister Stone, come and sit here!" she exclaimed, patting a cushion on the sofa invitingly. As he sat down she inspected him critically and, he felt, accusingly. "You did not sleep well," she said, plying him with coffee and creamy cakes.

Martin mumbled a denial, uncomfortably aware of Herr Richter who reclined on the other side of the table, smiling a subtle, brilliant smile that seemed to conceal a mocking amusement. "One in every five was a Nazi of some kind," Hugo had said. What about Richter?

The actor conversed with the fluency of a man who had always taken

it for granted that people expected him to be entertaining, as if that was how he paid for any hospitality he received. But Martin suspected his glibness for another reason. Behind the facade of effeminate mannerisms and sharp Berlin wit he thought he detected the cynicism of one with few scruples, a man who could easily have been a Nazi.

Yet it was infuriating that he should feel this curiosity about Richter's past. Why should he give a damn about the fellow? There were seventy million Germans, each with his own degree of guilt. To condemn them collectively or to probe each individual encountered was to succumb to paranoia. The only way to preserve one's sanity was to cultivate indifference.

With a determined effort he turned away and concentrated his attention on Frau Goetz who was now complaining about Herr Goldberg. She could not understand his lack of consideration for the other guests—especially as he had been in a concentration camp, she added inconsequentially. "In Buchenwald I learned to make my toilet in a cupful of cabbage water in five minutes," she insisted warmly.

"You were in Buchenwald?" Martin asked in surprise. She didn't look like a Jew.

Richter confirmed the fact on her behalf.

"Three years," he said, his thin thespic features expressing appropriate sympathy.

Frau Goetz went to the sideboard and rummaged in a drawer. She returned with a photograph of a group of women surrounded by American soldiers. The women looked out of the picture with the glazed indifference of people who had gone so far beyond suffering that they were too numbed to register either hope or despair. The contrast between their etiolated, skeletal faces and those of the vigorous, well-fed youngsters in uniform was profoundly shocking. It was as if the soldiers had taken a party of corpses into custody; as if, like Lazarus, the women had risen from the dead to haunt the living with the unforgettable accusation of their staring, lusterless, dead eyes.

But if Frau Goetz was conscious of the macabre quality of the photograph she gave no indication of it. "That's me," she said, pointing to a scarecrow in the center of the group with as much pride as if it were a graduation picture of her high school class. A reminiscent smile touched her lips. "They used to call me Snowflake. It was very silly. That one on the end, she was my best friend, Clara, a really nice person." Unable to resist the impulse to boast, she added: "Her husband was an important magistrate. He died in Auschwitz. Clara knew the very moment he breathed his last because that was when the first message came to her from the Other Side."

Frau Goetz sipped her coffee abstractedly. "I will never forget that day as long as I live," she said in a calm quiet voice. "We were on a burial party and Clara was very tired—the work was so heavy. She had been coughing for weeks, but she'd tried to hide her illness because if they found out they sent you away. Suddenly I noticed she was trembling: 'It's Otto,' she said, 'he's on the Other Side.' I could hardly hear what she was saying, she spoke so faintly. There was a strange look on

her face. 'The Beast will die soon,' she said. 'Otto has told me.' Three weeks later the war was over."

RICHTER cleared his throat. "It was a miracle," he declared, extracting a cigarette from a thin silver case and lighting it. "A miracle, Frau Goetz!"

She nodded solemnly. "Yes," she agreed, "a miracle. Clara and I still correspond. She lives in Israel now. Herr Goldberg came to me on her recommendation."

The telephone in the hall rang. She returned the photograph to the sideboard and went to answer it. "Professor Hokoyama, it's for you!" they heard her call.

Richter relaxed in his chair and blew a reflective stream of smoke towards the ceiling. "A remarkable woman, Frau Goetz. Did you know she was a cabaret artiste when she was young?"

Martin nodded.

"I don't remember her myself," Richter went on. "They say she was pretty—and very, very gay. She had more guts than most of us, too. People hid in her flat for years."

"So she's not Jewish?"

"Jewish! No. But she had a Jewish lover who was some sort of communist. Hid him from the Gestapo until he got out of the country. Later hiding Jews became a habit with her. In 1942 the S.S. raided her flat and found a woman and three children locked in a cupboard in her bedroom." Richter smiled slightly. "A regular Jew-sty, they called it."

The moment it was said he became uncomfortably aware of his tactlessness. "Their own swinish choice of language," he explained hurriedly. "I wouldn't like you to think—"

"Of course not." Martin examined the end of his cigarette with meticulous care.

Rather lamely, Richter said: "Anyway, Buchenwald changed her."

"It would be remarkable if it hadn't."

Martin's eye was caught by a faded theatre "still" in a dim corner of the room. He got up to examine it. "Please go on," he urged. "In what way has she changed?"

The picture showed a chocolate-box blonde dressed in the style of the Twenties, smiling coyly at a man in a double breasted check jacket once the fashionable attire of juvenile leads in musical comedy. They appeared to have been photographed while singing a duet. The man was young and had cynically intelligent features. A wayward lock of hair had fallen across his forehead giving his handsome face an appearance of dissipation. The girl was unmistakably Frau Goetz, but it took a moment or two before he recognized her partner as Hugo Krantz.

"She became religious," Richter was saying. "Someone converted her to the doctrines of the Plymouth Brethren. For a woman who loved pleasure so much it was quite a conversion. Now the only pleasure she seems to allow herself is an occasional little coffee party as an agreeable way of passing the time while waiting for the world to come to an inevitably bad end."

IN THE corridor Frau Goetz was having a minor altercation with Herr Goldberg. Her thin voice sniped at him through the bathroom door, provoking an angry rumbling of verbal artillery. It occurred to Martin that Goldberg's attitude was not different in kind from his own. Over-insistently, he was asserting his rights; the occupation of the bathroom vindicated his human dignity. It may have begun when he was carted off like a diseased animal to a concentration camp to be systematically tortured and degraded. Soon the inevitable deterioration of personality would have set in. Then, after the concentration camp, the D.P. camp: the body rotting in its own filth, subjected to periodic delousing not for its own sake but to protect privileged members of society from the danger of contamination. For a man who had been deloused for years, to be on the inside of a locked bathroom with unlimited hot water and a sweet-smelling cake of soap was to be in a beautiful temple dedicated to the worship of the human body.

Nor should one overlook the role of the bathroom in the metaphysics of the Nazi concentration camp. The bathroom was the ultimate mystery, the holy of holies. The wretched inmates, having endured every vileness and indignity, were finally lined up to be cleansed before a building clearly marked "Bath chamber." They stripped off their rags which were meticulously listed before fumigation, then, naked as the new-born and the dead, filed into the bathroom where jets hissed until the suffocated bodies stuck together with their own juices. Later the corpses were hosed with water to unglue them, so they underwent their cleansing after all.

Perhaps Goldberg had been a bath attendant in a concentration camp, working with a fanatic dedication to the ritual of the Bathroom in order to preserve his own miserable existence. And he must have dreamed of his elevation from acolyte to high priest, of the day when he would enter the Bathchamber to celebrate its ritual in his own way and emerge, finally, sweetened, purified and reborn.

Martin felt that he understood Herr Goldberg: he almost loved him.

But towards Frau Goetz, now that he knew about her past, he felt a deep personal sense of gratitude, as though she'd saved his own life.

THE HIGH heels of the saintly woman could be heard tip-tapping angrily along the corridor. "He makes me so mad!" she complained shrilly as she burst into the room. Two uneven red patches glowed on her cheeks. "Do you know what he's doing now? He's washing his shirts, if you please! I have guests waiting for a bath and he's doing his laundry!"

Making sure the door was opened so that her voice would carry to Goldberg's ears, she screamed: "It's the behavior of a monster! What normal person shuts himself up in the bathroom for half a day? It's not kind, it's not considerate, it's not neighborly!"

They all listened for the effect of this pronouncement, then a series of loud bangs on a galvanized tub made a hideous racket.

"*Lieber Gott!*" Frau Goetz wailed in alarm. "The man's gone raving mad."

Richter adopted an expression of commiseration. "He's making your life miserable, darling," he suggested, protruding a sly tongue from the corner of his mouth and winking broadly to Martin. "Why don't you tell him to pack his bags and go?"

"What am I, a Nazi?" she snapped. "I only want to come to a reasonable understanding about the bathroom. A reasonable understanding!" she repeated vehemently. Suddenly she grabbed the cumbersome old-fashioned radio and staggered out of the room with it, swaying from the waist like an overburdened ant. They heard her knocking against the walls of the corridor as she carried it to the bathroom and deposited it on the floor outside.

The clamor of an orchestra performing at full volume erupted deafeningly, setting up a perilous vibration among the crockery in the china cupboard. Goldberg's outraged voice could barely be heard above the din.

"It's not anti-Semitism at all," Frau Goetz was yelling as she returned to the sitting room. "Mister Stone, you haven't finished your coffee yet. Please sit down. There's no need to get upset."

"Really, I must—" he began.

She interrupted him at once. "No, no! You are my guest and I won't have you disturbed. Just take no notice of Herr Goldberg."

A small Japanese came in, smiling with anxious determination. "Frau Goetz, it's very difficult for me to practice," he said timidly.

"I understand the inconvenience, Professor Hokoyama. But it won't be for long." She introduced the Professor to Martin, the pleasantries being conducted in loud voices as between people who are hard of hearing. "Now do join us for a nice cup of coffee," she said sociably.

The Japanese put his hand to his ear. "I'm sorry, what did you say?"

"A nice cup of coffee," Frau Goetz repeated at the top of her voice.

"Ah, coffee!" Professor Hokoyama smiled painfully. "Some other time," he murmured, and withdrew with a polite bow.

The rest of them sat round the table tortured by an exuberant flourish of brass instruments. It would be Wagner, Martin thought grimly. On the other hand, a less bellicose composer would not have provided such suitable siege-music.

Then, abruptly, the noise stopped. Somebody had switched off the radio. With astonishing agility, Frau Goetz leaped off her chair and rushed to the bathroom just as the more lethargic Goldberg was about to lock himself in again.

"The bath is now free, Mister Stone," she called, inserting her small frame obstinately in the doorway.

"It's not free!" Goldberg bellowed.

But it was by no means accidental that Frau Goetz had survived incarceration in Buchenwald. Her determination was indomitable.

"If you do not leave at once, I shall get into the bath myself," she threatened, staring at him with brilliant angry eyes.

As Martin came down the corridor, the defeated Goldberg marched along, his dressing gown flapping around his skinny legs.

"Good morning, *mein Herr*," Martin said affably.

"Good morning," Goldberg strode past with a curt nod of the head. He paused for a moment before entering his room. "Anti-Semites!" he hissed contemptuously.

THE atmosphere in the apartment settled down to a humdrum peaceful domesticity. There was a clatter of crockery being washed in the kitchen; doors banged; voices sounded obscurely through the plaster walls; the Japanese resumed his playing of Mozart. Martin lay voluptuously steeped in hot water to the chin. As the fatigue of the previous night soaked out of his resilient body he experienced an unexpected unreasoning optimism. Towelling himself vigorously after the bath, he recalled an old nursery rhyme.

*Es war einmal ein Mann
Der hatte einen Schwamm;
Der Schwamm war ihm zu nass
Da ging er auf die Gass;
Die Gass war ihm zu grün
Da ging er nach Berlin. . . ."*

The rhyme, emerging out of a corner of the remote and forgotten past, reminded him of somebody whose existence had long since passed out of his mind, a Silesian girl with dark gentle eyes and a deep soft bosom who had nursed him when he was very small. She was his first love. Her clear young voice reciting the childish words returned so vividly that he could almost imagine it came from an adjoining room, communicating an ineffable feeling of happiness.

The fragile mood disintegrated abruptly. Frau Goetz was calling him to the telephone. He dressed hurriedly and went into the hall to answer it. At the other end of the wire Hugo sounded peeved at having been kept waiting.

"I've just spoken to my lawyer," he said. "He'll see you this afternoon at his office. Two-thirty. I'll send my car to take you there." Grudgingly he added: "Are you settling in all right?"

"Yes," Martin replied. "Everything's fine."

Hugo continued the conversation with an aimless persistence as though preparing the way for a difficult confession, but whatever it was he finally rang off without making it.

PIERRE VAN PAASSEN, the famous author of *Days of Our Years*, needs no introduction to Jewish readers. Here Mr. VAN PAASSEN, a close observer of Vladimir Jabotinsky for many years, presents a critical and sympathetic appraisal of that controversial figure in recent Jewish history. With this essay, *Midstream* introduces a series of portraits of outstanding personalities in world Zionism who helped to shape events during the past several decades.

Vladimir Jabotinsky: A Reminiscence

By PIERRE van PAASSEN

WHEN he first appeared on the scene as a young pamphleteer and public speaker around the turn of the century, many Jews in Eastern Europe felt that in Jabotinsky had come a great and gifted champion. His splendid oratorical talents, the earnest tone of his utterances, his critical sense and originality, marked him in their eyes as one admirably fitted for leadership in a great cause. He had a long and noble tradition behind him. He was at home both in Russia and in the Western world, and he was a shrewd observer of life. Brought up in that prosperous and richly variegated city of Odessa, once a center of intense Jewish cultural and intellectual activity, as well as of Russian liberalism, his mind was saturated with the lore and history of both these streams of "enlightenment." At the same time, much more than Herzl, and much earlier in life, Jabotinsky was painfully aware of the humiliated state of the Jewish people and their evident inability to throw off the burden of the *Galut*. He felt, however, that their impotence and lethargy derived from

the fact that powerful energies in the Jewish people were squandered through lack of discipline. The ideal, he held, could not be realized through meditation and discussion, but only in and through action. He passionately rebuked what he called the hazy idealism of the leaders. "What they give in love to an abstract humanity," he once exclaimed, "is withheld and stolen from the Jewish people." His own idealism was concerned solely with itself, with Jewish aspirations and with Jewish renown.

After joining the movement he rose rapidly in its higher councils. But he never reached the top. Although there were not many of the caliber of Jabotinsky, it also must be said that he just missed being a man of genius. He may have been right in many respects—from the Jewish point of view he was wrong in substance and spirit. In several instances he was shown to be lacking in depth of judgment. His temperament was too uneven, too tumultuous for sober reflection. Besides, he was not a good-humored man with a conciliatory mode of proceeding in business. More

than once, when seemingly on the verge of achievement, he withdrew suddenly, falling back into apathy and even disgust. But this came later. At the outset we find his analyses of the Jewish situation invariably acute and timely and his warnings against coming dangers pertinent, and sometimes startling. To many he seemed to be a bearer of good tidings from the future. When he first came into the public eye men turned to him for aid and comfort and inspiration. His fiery disposition, his indignation and the hard realism with which he expressed his thoughts gave the impression of a man of the vocation of a liberator who had caught a glimpse of the great invisible tomorrows which are hidden from the eyes of the ordinary run of mankind.

I do not think that Jabotinsky was exceeded by any man in the Zionist movement in physical and moral energy. He had no hobbies or pastimes. He was rarely even mildly joyous. He did not know and did not want to know what leisure was. Zionism was his sole passion. In the furtherance of its cause, he was a galvanic battery. He literally burnt himself out by the intensity of his propagandistic endeavors: traveling without letup for years on end, speaking for hours at a stretch to large and small gatherings, attending conferences with statesmen, diplomats and political leaders, dashing off newspaper articles on the corner of coffee-house tables, scarcely taking off time to eat or sleep. All his days he lived a life of great austerity. Though he knew a lot of loose powder to be lying around, he was careless and stuck at nothing, and was utterly indifferent to the safety of his own skin. He was always tense and in a hurry. He walked with clenched fists and a scowl on his face. With that bulldog jaw and those slightly protruding eyes behind a pair of thick glittering lenses, the brim of his

hat pulled over his face like a helmet's visor, he conveyed the impression of something that for want of a better name may perhaps be described as ferocious grace.

IT WOULD be the easiest thing in the world—it has been done before—to weave an aureole of romance around Jabotinsky's head. Legends need a hero and children can scarcely do without one. But the French philosopher Alain's method of inquiry in seeking "the principle of opposites" has a profounder dialectical value in that, through contradiction, it reveals the truth on a higher plane. It is therefore essential in briefly examining Jabotinsky's character and his role in Zionist affairs that certain affirmations here made about him be placed alongside their almost exact opposite.

"I want a state, he exclaimed in an address which he delivered again and again in different countries and in different languages beginning as early as 1918. I want a state with an army. I want an army with airplanes and bombs. . . . I want Jewish shock troops with bayonets, machine guns and grenades. . . . I don't want a 'national home' for the Jewish people in Palestine. . . . The Jewish people are not ready to retire to a home for the aged and obsolete. The Jewish people are coming of age. They have work to do. They have a house to build. They have enemies to be swept aside. . . ."

That was the Jabotinsky who believed in the virtues of the strong man and the heroic ruler. But that was also the man who seldom went about without a pocket edition of one of the great Italian poets on his person. Jabotinsky had studied literature in Rome and acquired so fluent an idiomatic command of Italian that he published a slender volume of verse in that language which carried away the praise

of no less a connoisseur than Luigi Pirandello. When he recited from Dante, he, curiously enough, eschewed all political and martial allusions occurring in the great Florentine's works. With an obvious sense of delight, he would pick passages where the poet refers to the hours of day and night: the sheet lightning of summer, the stars coming out one by one, the scented freshness of the breeze before day-break. Light in general was Jabotinsky's special and chosen source of poetic beauty. Dante he studied and dwelt upon like music. Even in Zurich in 1929, where he fought the proposal for the enlargement of the Jewish Agency in a three hours' speech brisling with invective, passion and fire, he found time in the evening to read us some of the immortal passages from the *Divine Comedy*.

In spite of the high promise and brilliance with which he set out, Jabotinsky cannot be said to have succeeded in capturing the imagination of the Jewish masses or to have won their confidence. Doubtless, they heard him gladly, they read avidly what he wrote, but they did not follow him. In more than one quarter he was looked upon as a crank and a poseur. At times it seemed as if he spread a subtle atmosphere of defiance and even of suspicion around him. Traditional Jews remained aloof from him. They were instinctively on guard and wary in his presence. There was something which they felt to be alien to the Jewish spirit in Jabotinsky's approach to the ultimate questions. This sentiment was more intuitive than rational but had the same effect in that it separated Jabotinsky from the start from a large segment of the Jewish people. The fact that there was not a spark of mystic spirituality in the man also, no doubt, played a part in this respect. Others were repelled when they grew aware

that Jabotinsky could not easily transcend the egocentric disposition of his character and did not enter willingly into cooperation with others.

The basic intuition of Jabotinsky's thought, the driving power behind his political and economic ideas, was his conception of man as a unity of knowledge and action. He fell far short of achieving this essential oneness in himself and vaguely felt its absence as a hindrance to the full unfolding of his creative powers. To overcome his uncertainties he took refuge in wrath and combat. All his life he wore a mask of audacity and turbulence. That he adopted Houston Chamberlain's philosophy of "living dangerously" and took on the grand airs of a permanent contradictor was at bottom no more than the resentment of an unrewarded genius. He was not by any means of an unfriendly disposition, but he had difficulty in appearing genial and what the Viennese call *gemuetlich*. Seldom if ever did I know him to be warm and winning as were, for instance, those personalities singularly rich and glowing in the spirit and essence of life who were his contemporaries: Hayim Greenberg, Shmaryahu Levin or Bialik. Ronald Storrs, the first civil governor of Jerusalem, thought that a more gallant and charming companion than Jabotinsky would be hard to find. His conversation indeed was very copious and limpid, not dealing much in epigram or anecdote, but very easy and informative. But there could be a streak of tough sarcasm in it. He used few words of praise or blame. He was not very often sorry or glad and never seemed surprised. But he had excellent manners: when being introduced he clicked his heels and bent from the waist. His friends accounted for this peculiarity in social deportment by citing his brief career in the British army where indeed many such idiocies were in vogue.

He was sensitive to the point of touchiness and stood on his dignity through thick and thin. He easily made an issue of personal honor. When I suggested one day that while in Zurich, where he was to deliver a lecture, he should call on Leonhard Ragaz and compliment the leader of the Religious Socialist movement in Europe on his book *Ich bekenne mich zum Zionismus*, Jabotinsky replied somewhat testily: "*Voyons, il ne faut pas me demander de sortir de mon rôle.*" I was perhaps too young at the time to realize that the future *Rosh Betar* (chief of the Zionist Revisionist youth organization) could not be expected to make a bow to a pacifist professor of theology.

LOOKING back over the interval of sixteen years that has elapsed since Jabotinsky's passing, there come to mind some aching blanks in his stature. No doubt the creative energy was there, but one cannot with the best will in the world assess his crude Nietzscheanism as cool and audacious statesmanship. Nor was he a rebel in the true sense of the word. A man who announces at the outset of his career that he is going to be a rebel, as Jabotinsky did, is casting a role for himself. The most charitable thing that may be said of such a man is that he substitutes presentiments for ideas.

Whether Jabotinsky was a statesman or not cannot be said with finality because he was never, beyond the recital of general principles, put to the test in being called upon to face the real problems of government and administration. With his fierce aversion to compromise, he would not easily (if ever he had been entrusted with the responsibility of high office) have found the middle way of checks and balances which is the *sine qua non* of democratic procedure. It would also have deprived him of the acclaim of his fol-

lowers; and his followers, of the joy and inspiration they found in the vehemence, not to say ruthlessness of their leader's accusations and denunciations.

Till this day the main theme of the encomiums poured out on Jabotinsky's personality and his role and function in the Zionist movement, is his amazing foresight. To hear and read the orators and writers of the political party which he founded, their leader not only held the keys to the universe in his hands but he was, almost to a fantastic degree, endowed with the gift of clairvoyance. What is true is that the art of governing is the art to foresee. On this maxim of Lord Acton's are based the principal claims for Jabotinsky's superiority over his contemporaries.

But what did he really foresee? It is claimed that he alone and first of all foresaw the Arab problem rise as an obstacle of almost doomsday ominousness in the path of the emerging Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. But others among the Zionist ideologists and tacticians, and not the least, were just as early and just as gravely perturbed as Jabotinsky was about the steady deterioration of Judeo-Arabic relations. One need but refer back to the yellowing tomes of *Der Jude*, the journal of the German Zionists, to realize how sensitively and reasonably these men discussed the Arab situation. Half a dozen could be named offhand who did not "scorn caution's awful lesson": Martin Buber, Hans Kohn, Berl Katzenelson, Nahum Goldmann, Max Brod, Felix Weltsch and several others of the deepest thinkers of Zionism were as early as 1918 and '19 seized with alarm at the apparent inability of the Zionist leadership to arrive at a *modus vivendi*, or even a colloquy, with the Arab chiefs in Palestine.

Not Jabotinsky, but Nordau is the man who first foresaw, when as far back as 1920, thirteen years before Hitler, he called for the evacuation of East European Jewry and their transfer to Eretz Israel even if they should have to live in camps for ten years and be kept alive by gifts of charity as were once the *Chaluka* Jews. At another time Jabotinsky in dead earnest advocated taking away the League of Nations mandate from Britain and entrusting Poland with the task of building a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine—Poland, the country where a *numerus clausus* was in force, where the Jewish middle classes were deliberately destroyed by a ruinous system of taxation amounting to expropriation, and where the Jewish proletariat had sunk to the lowest conceivable level of human degradation. Was that statesmanship? Had Jabotinsky never heard of Herzl's terrible warning sounded at the height of the Dreyfus tumult: "If this can happen in France, the most civilized country in the world, what hope is there then for Jews in countries and under governments which have not reached the level that France reached a hundred years before?"

IN 1940 AND '41 when I came to know him perhaps more intimately than before in the twenty-odd years of our acquaintance, Jabotinsky was frequently subject to fits of despondency of the most somber kind, a sentiment that was accentuated by a feeling of abandonment and neglect. With that he had a presentiment that he would not survive till the time of harvest. Stopping abruptly in the middle of the road while strolling in New York's Central Park at two o'clock one morning, he said forlornly: "I am sad today without knowing the cause." And then, correcting himself, and lowering his

head, he added: "I do know. I am sad because I feel lonely, abandoned and spiritually empty." This was no rhetorical exaggeration. This was the natural man speaking. For a fleeting instant he had dropped his disguise of inflexibility and severity. But in the next instant, as if ashamed or regretful of having laid bare a corner of his heart, he stiffened back into position and resumed the stoical attitude and the clipped military, almost metallic tone of voice which was habitual with him.

There were very few who were associated with Jabotinsky on terms of equality, either from age or position or daily contact and the like in unrestrained familiar knowledge and friendship. He was revered by many. He was idolized even. But what he never experienced and yet desired most ardently was personal affection. Once, it was in Warsaw in 1927, at the home of a prominent textile merchant of that city, he said that he wanted to make of his life "a work of art, a perfect system" or rather "a house complete with rooms and stairways and cellars and garrets. . . ." He cited all the appurtenances of a perfect dwelling but forgot to mention the windows. Though constantly pulled to and fro by Pascal's reasons of the heart, he chose to ignore them or stifle them. He, who had been hailed as a prodigy in his childhood in Russia, felt frustrated. He sulked and pouted. He was angry with his time. He needed an echo for his dreams, visible and exterior repercussions to back him up. When these were not forthcoming, he faltered. The lack of spiritual strength of which he spoke that night in Central Park, no doubt, proceeded from his loneliness, but his loneliness cannot be regarded as other than self-inflicted. At the Zionist Congress in 1929, Jabotinsky virtually cut himself off from the main stream of Jewish life.

Ever after that, till his death, he persisted in a state of isolation which, although extremely painful to him, he was too proud to terminate. While it is true that conflict and strife inside a movement may be actively unselfish, Jabotinsky's studied aloofness and over-rigged show of independence, were a constant barrier to close companionship with men engaged in the pursuit of the same objective.

At his funeral one of his eulogists exclaimed that it was as if a great bell tolling overhead had suddenly grown silent. The analogy was false, or, at least, sadly inappropriate to those who had seen much of Jabotinsky in the last year of his life. It is not to be denied that to the young Jews who leaned upon Jabotinsky, who lived upon him and made him, so to speak, their better self, his death came with crushing and overwhelming pain. But he did not go out as a ringing bell or a roaring lion. When Jabotinsky died, he was, prematurely to be sure, a weary old man whose powers were spent, whose work was done, and who, for several years had been conspicuous only in a very restricted circle.

And yet, this also must be said: although he often plunged men into confusion and dismay and he unsettled much that the sages of the movement had instructed, what must be praised in Jabotinsky without reserve was his admirable intellectual honesty. I have never known him to sponsor a measure in which he did not wholly believe himself. He never tried to advance a solution which in his deepest self he judged false or inadequate. Such gifts are rare, but rarer still is a character which wins its way to wide and significant recognition amidst all the noise and throng of men by the sheer force of its integrity. It is this particular quality which belongs to the life of Vladimir Jabotinsky.

THE predisposing influence which guided Jabotinsky amid all the jarring discord of opinions and schools to a significant position in the Jewish national movement was not, it seems, that almost perennial stand-by of the writers of memoirs: the dear and dark little *Cheder* and his mother's kosher kitchen, but the tremendous historical fact and factor of Russia. All his life Jabotinsky spoke of that country and its people with a certain nostalgic wistfulness and regret. When he was physically exhausted, discouraged and beset by problems and demands of all sorts, all that was needed to restore his drooping spirits was someone to speak to him in the Russian language. In a flash his weariness vanished, the light came back into his eyes and his troubles rolled off his shoulders like "Christian's" pack of sin in the story of Bunyan's pilgrimage. If I saw this happen once, I saw it happen half a dozen times. He certainly knew all there was to be known about Russian literature, history and politics, but when I came to know him, he, like the general run of secularist liberals, showed a condescending indifference to one particular phase of Russian life which was, certainly in Jabotinsky's youth, a more important motive force in life and action and of deeper significance to Russians than either economics and politics; I mean the deep messianic currents in the Russian people's consciousness. He simply detested the Russian mystics like Soloviev, Kumiakov and Berdaiev; Dostoevsky he recognized only as an outstanding student of human affairs. From this attitude flowed his slighting, shoulder-shrugging dismissal of Hasidism and of a good deal of traditional Judaism. He put them all in the same bag. Once I heard him refer bluntly to the messianic dream, which in my estimation is the highest creation of the Jewish

soul, as "a lot of apocalyptic tomfoolery."

This was not, to be sure, a defect in character, but it did limit the range of his vision and detracted from the universality of his spirit. If he had paid more attention to the mystics, instead of going along with the liberal, confident matter-of-fact men of the 19th century, he would much sooner have recognized the suicidal madness of the era and, for one thing, not have continued predicting a Russian military victory in the first World War right up till the end of 1917. The Russian liberals, under whose influence Jabotinsky stood in his youth and young manhood, were still acclaiming the era of enlightenment and liberalism long after symptoms of decay were abundantly manifest. They wanted to make of their country a replica of France, of an ideal France that is, a France they knew only from lecture halls and schoolbooks. They explained the crisis of Western civilization solely as a consequence of social and economic changes brought on by the machine age.

When Jabotinsky returned from Bern, where he studied jurisprudence, the tension occasioned by the Dreyfus Affair was at its height in all Europe, but he found the Russian youth and intelligentsia still hopeful of and determined to institute a just social order. They believed that the sources of a new social order lay in the past when the Russian people were a purely agricultural people and for that reason nearer to the ideal of a universal humanity. This communal outlook led the Russian nationalists to preach the gospel of Russia's world mission. Its basis was to be Christian under the aegis of a purified Orthodox Church. Jabotinsky still used to grow incensed in afteryears when he recalled "the passive character of Russian national-

ism." The unutterable patience of the Russian people he held up to scorn and ridicule. He cited the record of Judea as a shining example: the smallest state in the Roman Empire having also been the most tumultuous and prone to revolt, requiring the constant presence of the most battle-practiced legions, while the Russians after the departure of the conquering Tartars, went on paying the war tribute to the Khan of Khans for a hundred years.

In the revolution of 1905 Russian liberalism was crushed between the two millstones of Communism and nationalism. Though the revolution was abortive, the Communists succeeded in implanting their mystique in the soil of Russian messianism. When that happened Jabotinsky was forcefully thrown back upon his Jewish antecedents. But the love of Russia never died in him. Of course the fact must not be abused and dragged in to explain everything, but that love, it seems to me, was the secret in which Jabotinsky remained entangled all his life. He was baffled by it and tongue-tied. The separation from Russia left in him reverberations of resentment of which he scarcely suspected the origin. It forced him into habits of coldness and into evasiveness. It made an exile of him even in Zionism. For although the destiny of the Jewish people was of overwhelming importance to him, in the back of his mind he was a man of two worlds, plain as land and sea. There lay the tragic break or the clash in his personality. By conviction he could not follow the Marxists. He hated bitterly all forms of Socialism. Had it been otherwise, I venture to say that he would have risen very high in the Bolshevik hierarchy. He was fully as able a military strategist as that other brilliant Jew from his immediate neighborhood, Leon Trotsky, the creator of the Red Army.

That gallant gentleman, Colonel John Henry Patterson, who commanded one of the battalions of the Jewish Legion under Allenby in the liberation of Palestine, told me once that even among the instructors at the British Staff College, with the possible exception of Repington, there was not one who could match Jabotinsky in competently and expertly discussing any detail of military science. Whether he dealt with Joshua or Xenophon, Alexander, Napoleon or Garibaldi—Garibaldi was his hero—Jabotinsky could hold an audience spellbound while reviewing the underlying causes of any particular war, the merits of the great commanders, the faults in their strategy, as well as the causes of their triumphs and defeats.

One of his favorite subjects was the 16th century's Wars of Religion in France. For his information on this subject he used to visit the dusty old Huguenot library on the Rue des Saints Pères in Paris where I found him one day with his nose buried in one of the folios of Calvin's *Institution*. It was on that occasion, in discussing the doctrine of predestination—the only time we spoke of religion—that Jabotinsky came up with a qualification or a definition of Calvinism which, when he learned of it, immensely pleased Dr. Inge, the Dean of St. Paul's. "I have an idea," said Jabotinsky, "that those Huguenots were not so much Christians as baptized Stoics."

IN THE first volume of *Rebel and Statesman*,* the distinguished author Joseph Schechtman relates how on a visit to South Africa in 1928, Jabotinsky astonished the Italian ambassador to that country by addressing him in his own language. He aston-

ished me no less by speaking Flemish in Antwerp. Strolling about in that city one summer day in 1932, I noticed a sandwich man carrying a sign announcing Vladimir Jabotinsky as a speaker at the Salle Rubens. I had some difficulty getting into the hall as I had to take my place at the end of a line extending over several city blocks.

When Jabotinsky finally appeared on the stage, dressed in evening clothes, he thanked the Burgomaster of Antwerp, Dr. Camile Huysmans, who was present, and the municipal authorities for their hospitality and he did so in . . . Flemish. With one stroke he had that huge audience in his hand.

The war of languages in Belgium was then at its height. In order to hasten the denationalization of the Flemings, which had been the policy of successive Belgian governments since 1839, a new law had been introduced under the provisions of which twenty-five families opting for French as the language of instruction for their children, obtained a French school. In this way bastions of French culture were set up in the very heart of Flanders. Jewish immigrants, of whom there were between 50,000 and 75,000 in Flanders, at the time, generally and naturally opted for French, as French is a world language and Flemish or Dutch (they are exactly the same) only a regional tongue. In this way the Jews became unwitting tools in the hands of the Belgian Government in its drive to denationalize the Flemings, and at the same time the enemies of the Flemish "activists" and nationalists.

But now suddenly the limping-on-two-opinions Jewish community of Antwerp heard Jabotinsky speak in that tongue which in those days was all too frequently held up to scorn in the French-language press as an uncouth, awkward, peasant jargon. With his opening words Jabotinsky stunned his

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audience into bewilderment. For an instant there was perplexed silence as if men doubted the evidence of their own ears. When they recovered, a storm of applause broke loose. Jabotinsky lifted the Flemish activists, who had come out in large numbers, into the seventh heaven by quoting one line from their poet-priest, Guido Gezelle, a sentence which summed up the whole plight of the Flemish people cut off from their Dutch motherland: "Must Flanders then forever wear the Walloon (French) straight-jacket?" There was pandemonium in the Salle Rubens that night. Many wept. Thousands of voices intoned the national hymn, while Jabotinsky stood stiffly to attention. For the first time a stranger, who was a man of international status and reputation, had taken notice of the Flemish national cause.

It was also the first time that I heard Jabotinsky speak in public. He made a deep impression on me. I readily grant that the dual subject matter of his address, "Flemish and Jewish Nationalism," lay very close to my heart. From the start I was captivated by Jabotinsky's manner and deportment. There was an undeniable air of distinction about the man. He still had something of what I would call the old-world courtesy, a certain suavity, a certain urbanity, a certain charm and polish, qualities which have since well-nigh vanished from the public platform and the pulpit, and that not only in Antwerp. His speech was plain, direct, unornamented and free from all faults of taste. There was cohesion in it and logical sequence. Jabotinsky was at ease that night, outwardly at least. He spoke with force and vigor, without the slightest trace of artificiality. Though he made few gestures, his presentation was vivid and lucid. When Jabotinsky spoke, men thought of the things he spoke of, and not of his oratory or of

his person. Though he seldom spoke less than two hours or two hours and a half, he never rambled or went off on tangents. I never, in afteryears, saw him use notes, yet generally his discourses gave the impression of having been thoroughly prepared and rehearsed.

AFTER the meeting, when I found Jabotinsky at the stage door struggling through a crowd of admirers and disciples, I accompanied him, at his own request, to the Hotel Century where we soon sat talking of every conceivable subject without noticing the passing of time. At five in the morning we went for a stroll along the Keyzerlei and then took a ride on a streetcar to the Scheldt quays to see the sun come up where once Tyl Eulenspiegel saw the glory of Flanders rise from the waters.

While standing on the quay, Jabotinsky suddenly announced that he was going to Holland that day. He intended to take an early train for Maastricht and from there proceed by bus to the village of Heerlen in the Dutch province of Limburg. I pricked up my ears with astonishment, for it was to Heerlen that I planned to go myself.

"Not by any chance to see . . . Brandt van Varewijk?" I asked.

"That's the man with whom I have an appointment," responded Jabotinsky. Surprise piled upon surprise. I, too, had an appointment with Brandt van Varewijk, or rather with Msgr. Robrecht de Smet, who used Van Varewijk as a pseudonym. This high prelate, by the way, was a personal friend of Nahum Sokolow. As vicar-general for the Scandinavian countries, he was preparing the establishment of a Roman Catholic episcopate in those lands. But he was also, and as such I knew him, the gray eminence, the se-

cret head of the most militant wing of the Flemish nationalist movement. Under that pseudonym of his, Msgr. de Smet published a weekly journal of which a few thousand copies were smuggled from Holland into Belgium and which carried on its masthead the warning: "Flemings never forget! Belgium is *not* your fatherland!" With a good laugh Jabotinsky and I made the discovery that we had both been occasional contributors to De Smet's clandestine journal, he writing a column under the general title "Other National Movements," and I, one called "From the Enemy's Camp," by which term, may God forgive me, was meant the city of Paris.

At Heerlen, in Msgr. de Smet's study where we arrived in the pouring rain around five in the afternoon, something happened which may in retrospect throw a revealing light on an incident or rather a series of incidents in Jabotinsky's life which haunted and embarrassed and even hounded him till the end of his days. I mean, of course, his conclusion of a pact with the Ukrainian nationalists under the *Hetman*, Simon Petlura. Neither Jabotinsky himself nor any of his biographers have ever given a fully satisfactory explanation of why he entered into an agreement with the Ukrainian anti-Bolshevik provisional government to raise and furnish a certain number of Jewish troops or gendarmerie in its support. The puzzling aspect of the pact was that Petlura, the head of the Ukrainian nationalist government, was himself a *pogromchik* who actually ordered the slaughter of Jews in Kiev, Poltava and other Ukrainian towns. In revenge for these crimes, Petlura, it will be recalled, was assassinated by Sholom Schwarzbart in Paris where the *Hetman* had fled following the final defeat of the Whites by the Reds.

How could Jabotinsky ever have collaborated with Petlura? It was in the pre-episcopal palace of Msgr. de Smet in Heerlen that I think I found a possible answer to that question. After dinner De Smet unfolded to us his plan to intensify the propaganda for Flemish freedom. He envisaged a separation of the Flemish provinces from Belgium and their reattachment to and incorporation into the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As a preliminary move he proposed that different nationalistic, dissident and separatist bodies and movements which then existed in Alsace, Brittany, Catalonia, the Basque-land and in Flanders, pool their resources, act in concert by supporting each others' *revendications*, and in short, make common cause against the oppressor states such as France and Spain, and, in the case of the Jewish people, who were to be included in de Smet's scheme, against Britain which, in Jabotinsky's phrase, had turned its mandate over Palestine "virtually upside down." The name of the new organization was to be "The International of the Oppressed Peoples." Jabotinsky and de Smet agreed that the new International would be a puissant instrument to counter the thunder on the left made by the League Against Imperialism which Moscow had set up in Paris and placed under the chairmanship of Henri Barbusse, the famous author of *Under Fire*.

I might yet say that our International did not last very long. We held some meetings of delegates in the back-room of a *bistro* on the Place de Rennes in Paris. "International" contacts, however, were abruptly broken off and for the most part indignantly disavowed when our Alsatian fellow delegates, upon returning home, accompanied and reinforced their protests against the introduction of the French Republic's *école laïque* or neutral

school system into their province, with a few bombs thrown against the facade of government buildings at Colmar and Strassbourg. Jabotinsky, it is true, did not entirely disapprove of this kind of direct action, arguing magniloquently that none could tell what torch of freedom might be lit by such tactics. But when the French security police began a systematic search for our delegates, even Jabotinsky thought it wisest to disband and disperse. He warned me to efface all traces, burn whatever documents and letters I possessed and to establish alibis wherever necessary. The owner of the *bistro*, a Breton separatist, was advised to have his defiant shop sign *Au Rendez-Vous des Nations Opprimées* painted over into a more innocuous *Au Rendez-Vous des Chauffeurs*. The precaution we had taken of never using our real names in connection with the International's affairs probably saved us from arrest, though once, upon being recognized on the Place de l'Opéra where an anti-Flemish demonstration was in progress, I had to make a run for it, pursued by French police and Belgian patriots alike over the whole length of Paris, till I found temporary refuge in Marvin Lowenthal's home on the Quai de Bethune.

Now Jabotinsky certainly did not take a seat on the board of directors of that International of Oppressed Peoples because of any pronounced sympathies for Flemish, Catalan, Basque or Breton national aspirations. He entered, as he said, because he was willing to make a pact with the devil himself if he thought the Jewish people could be served thereby. Some of the delegates to our International were unquestionably anti-Semites, while the Bretons and the Alsations in their opposition to the French government's policy of separation of Church and State, talked very much like authentic

clerical fascists. By being in their company or in their confidence and by keeping *au courant* with their general program or plans, Jabotinsky felt that he might receive forewarning, if not himself then through me, of anything detrimental to the Jewish people and their national interests being concocted, schemed or set afoot.

May not such or a similar motive or consideration have entered into Jabotinsky's pact-making with the Ukrainian nationalists earlier in 1921? Lone fighter that he was, he did not hesitate to move heaven and earth—and hell as well at times—when it was a question of averting dangers threatening the Jewish people. The insinuation was launched more than once that Jabotinsky felt drawn to the Petlurists because intrinsically their tactics and ideology appealed to his own sentiments as an alleged crypto-fascist. But what then were the two Socialist-Zionists doing in ministerial positions in the provisional Ukrainian government, *i.e.*, in much closer physical, not to say ideological proximity to Petlura than Jabotinsky who was not even inside Russia at the time?

In the same category falls Jabotinsky's organization of a march to Palestine by the Polish Jewish masses in 1936. His opponents roared with laughter and still return to the charge when they hark back to the "General without an Army" and the Polish government's breaking up the march a few miles outside Warsaw. Was that so laughable? Would the victims of the crematoria laugh if they were capable of it? Or would those men and women who were prevented from escaping from the obscene terror not rather rise to address Jabotinsky's detractors with the reproach: *Kol d'may achicha*—Hear the cry of your brother's generations who cannot be!

SINCE the coming into existence of the State of Israel, the memory of Jabotinsky has been rapidly fading into the limbo of forgotten things. In the eyes of a new generation of American Jews standing in the presence of the impressive achievements in Eretz Israel, Jabotinsky's lifework and striving may indeed appear slight, if not negligible. Perhaps the time hasn't come to make a final evaluation of the man's strength and range as a stimulus in the onward wave of political Zionism. This much, however, may be said even now without exaggeration: as a critic within the Zionist movement Jabotinsky had no peer. He had the courage to be unpopular. And also this: by his consistent, tireless opposition to the manner in which the British Government of yore carried, or rather, "mis-carried" out its obligations under the League's mandate, Jabotinsky proved himself, not Dr. Weizmann's or the Jewish Agency's most troublesome opponent, but their most valuable collaborator. If there was, as I definitely think there was, a tacit and perhaps more than a mere tacit understanding between Dr. Weizmann and Jabotinsky, a deliberate division of role and function under which the one acted as diplomat and statesman and the other as critic, gadfly and public nuisance, one cannot but admire Jabotinsky's selflessness in making a sacrifice of himself by assuming the most ungrateful and the least popular of the two roles. Such self-effacement in a man who was fully conscious of his own intellectual qualities and capacities for leadership, leaves one silent with admiration.

I did not, I must admit, come to this view in Jabotinsky's own lifetime, but shortly after his death when, at a meeting in Washington under the chairmanship of Colonel Patterson, to my utter amazement but, as it later turned out, on Jabotinsky's own insistence in

the very last hour of his life, a group of his followers elected me national chairman of a committee for an army of stateless and Palestinian Jews. In my home on Riverside Drive in New York, where David Ben Gurion and Louis Lipsky heard the news of the committee's formation, the present Prime Minister of Israel exploded with anger. Pounding the table, he exclaimed: "I won't have it! I won't stand for it! Do you hear, Lipsky, I will never consent to the setting up of such an army!" On the other hand, at the St. Regis Hotel in the same city, Dr. Weizmann received the news with a broad smile and with an expression of his entire satisfaction. Without a moment's hesitation he dictated, paraphrased and signed a formal statement of assent which was not for publication, to be sure, but which delineated the new "Jabotinsky" committee's purposes and objectives.

It was then that I knew something of what Jabotinsky must have felt in such or similar circumstances when he, for general policy's sake, departed from or made a move contrary to the official Zionist line. Denunciations and anathemas rained on my head. Suddenly I saw it spelled out in the press that I had become a *sakono far dem Idishen Folk*, a menace to the Jewish people. I was accused of "trampling on the sacred cause of Zion with a pair of jackboots inherited from the late *Rosh Betar*." Men and women in the leadership of the Zionist movement for whom I entertained the highest respect (and still do) turned on me with bitter denunciation and in a few instances with miserable slander. But I could not answer without giving the game away....

THE abiding merit of Jabotinsky lay in his readiness to abandon channels and institutions which had become petrified by blind use, by fear or

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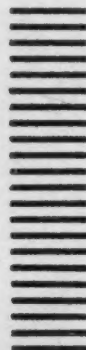
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by inertia. But he was in error when he looked upon an eventual Jewish State in Palestine as an end in itself. He who so proudly and often defiantly identified himself as a nationalist "maximalist," was in reality a restricted "minimalist." As a secularist liberal, he ignored, disclaimed and even condemned any particular position, claim, mission or destiny for the Jewish people in the general scheme inherent in or flowing from the Chosen People concept, the Covenant, and the Torah. He interpreted Herzl's views as aiming at making the Jewish people or letting the Jewish people become wholly and totally like the other peoples. With this view, which was not by any means confined to Jabotinsky and his immediate associates, there entered into the modern Zionist movement, virtually from its inception, an element alien to and in flagrant contradiction with the traditional concepts of Judaism which rejects and condemns outright, in the most uncompromising manner and in all circumstances, any and all moves or tendencies towards assimilationism both on the individual and on the national level.

Jabotinsky's emphasis on a state with armies, "like the other peoples," as the *summum bonum* to be attained by the Jewish people is the demonology of a people's own sovereignty. It is the idolatry of the moloch state against which the Prophets gravely warned. Through the seductions of a completely secularist life, such as Jabotinsky proposed, Zionism would have entered ere this upon a period of spiritual petrification,

a terrible order which for the higher activities of the human spirit would be death.

It is perhaps presumptuous for a non-Jew, but it cannot be helped, to say that Jabotinsky's was the un-Jewish pagan view when to all intents and purposes he rejected the divine mandate of *mamlechet kohanim ve-goy kadosh*. If the light of a universal humanity does not always and again break through the national forms, Zionism stands forth curtailed and diminished in its resemblance to the other Levantine nationalisms. The Zionism that does not envisage a complete transformation and renovation of society and a renewal of Jewish life, the Zionism that does not in fact strive to be Isaiah-Socialism, is not a genuine Zionism. Without a spiritual rebirth, Zion itself is but Eretz Israel and is in danger of remaining sterile, earthy soil.

Happily for those who have ears to hear there remains still audible, like a constant and undeviating undertone, beneath much of Zionist endeavor in the Holy Land, the murmur of the eternal sea of the Torah!

As against Jabotinsky's clamor for a state with an army and banners, the poet Bialik, back in 1927, marvelously summed up for me the pioneering work of Zionism as preparation for a messianic era: "So much blood, so much sweat, so much love is being poured into this soil of Eretz Israel, that sooner or later the womb of the earth must grow pregnant and a Prophet will issue."

The Fool

By JON SILKIN

THERE was a lady
Who through her mind, green fell the plained cry
For all the riches which
A garden yields; while under her budded trees,
Although she was a withered lady,
I through the tangled maze of hair my girl
Lay netted in, loved all day
This lady thought of love as she lay dying,
Called from her antique sheets;
Flat on the dolphins' pillow lay the carved
Heads of the fishes that
Crashed through the waves beneath her hair, naked
And wreathed white about those fish,
As I came in to see if she were dead.
And as she lay she called
'John', she called, 'below my garden there
Is treasure; count but the cost
To bury me there.' I buried her that night
Her ghost burst its frail flesh,
The moon, through the mild sky, raised its mouth and
Struck sharply the side of
My spade, and died. It fell and, falling, died;
Like a white child it died.
Then all exclaimed that I had killed the moon,
So that it seemed to me
I must dig now to rid my sharp soul of
Its dark, contextual guilt.
So when the stars, those multitudinous hands
Rose with their fingers spread
Through the metallic night-sky, I cried out
'Where is that gold, O indeed
Where is that treasure which you gave to me?'
While every voice cried out
Sharply, for pain, that I had killed the moon.
No argument appeased
The terror of their wide, pacific souls.
For yet the moon, its stars
Of flint fingers, they cry
On me, the night my sky,
Here is this fool who seeks some treasure still.

New Song of Ascents

By SAMUEL MENASHE

The singing sons of the invisible God
Disparate now — a broken rod
Faltered and then found their feet
Agile on New Jerusalem's street
Raising from her old stones
A dance remembered in their bones.

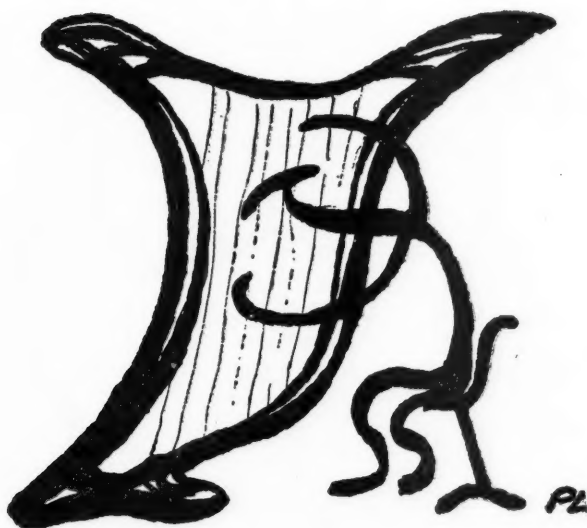
The Talker

(from a *Midrash*)

By HARVEY SHAPIRO

While all the choiring angels cried:
Creation's crown is set awry!
God fabled man before he was,
And boasting of His enterprise
Bade angels say the simple names
That mark in place each bird and beast.

But they were dumb, as He foretold —
When man stepped from the shuddering dust
And lightly tossed the syllables,
And said his own name, quick as dirt.
Then angels crept into their spheres,
And dirt, and bird, and beast were his.



My Friend's Eye

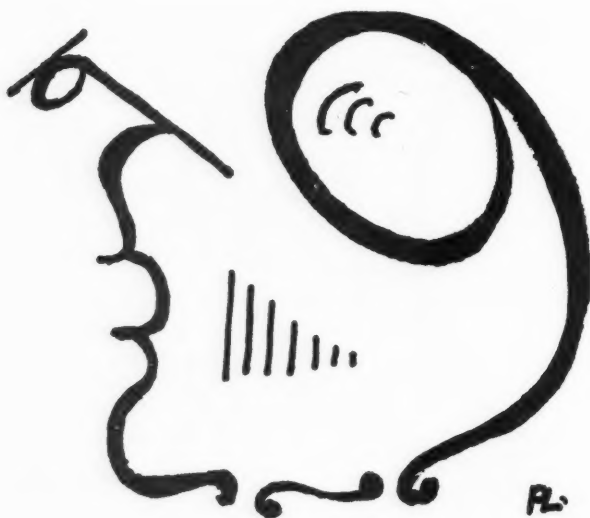
By DAVID GALLER

An army stood,
Ten thousand strong, in my friend's eye,
Without insignia,
No standards or leaders at the heads of files,
The day he lost sight of the fluctuant line
Between evil and good.

A riderless horse
Plunged by in review, back and forth,
Its saddle cut to shreds,
Until the ranks achieved fair discipline
Of shuffling feet and shifting bayonets,
As through some absent force.

Beyond the noise,
Two generals met who wagged of fate,
Drinking to love and hate,
While in the field, the host, not knowing whether
To surge forward or hold fast, gnashed its teeth —
To simulate a choice.

When that parade
Came to an end, and rumor spread
That the foe did not exist,
Abysmal silence droned the Death of the Will,
And, terrified at the thought of their dismissal,
Ten thousand strong fell dead.



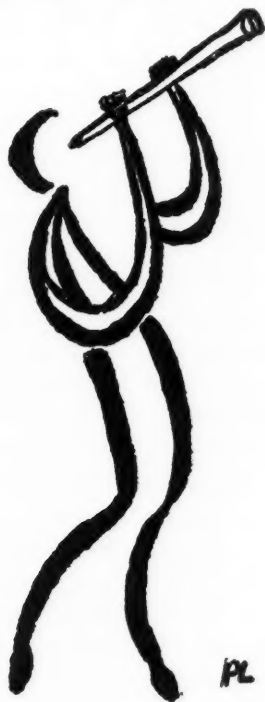
Areas of Conscience

By HARRY ROSKOLENKO

And sin was ordinary; and so I sinned
In all my ways of youth.
I drowned a pale gray cat
And now I love all things that creep;
I love in all my ways
The halting green of growing
What once was small and I.

And pain is equal; and so I fear
In all my ways, the times
That drown me as a cat.
And now I hate all things that weep
In all my ways of youth,
The sullen stance of yellow
What once was green and I.

I fear my being what is to be,
For I know my ways of youth;
The clown that made the poet find
The moments equal to the mind;
And all the ways that made me grow
Now balance in equal perfidy
That halting knowing that made me I.



Correspondent of the *Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*, MAURICE CARR last summer revisited Algeria as a member of a party of foreign journalists. Readers of *Midstream* will remember his article, "North African Drama," which appeared in our Autumn, 1955 issue.

The Algerian Tragedy

By MAURICE CARR

WHEN THE Dey of Algiers in a fit of temper swatted the French Consul with a fly-whisk one-hundred and thirty years ago, he unwittingly started an inter-continental upheaval which continues to this day. France riposted by invading Algeria in 1830. France had long been poised for such a move for ever since the Middle Ages the Algerian pirates, banded together in a professional Guild of Corsairs, had preyed upon Mediterranean shipping and raided the southern coast of Europe, carrying off loot and "infidels" who were held for ransom or sold into slavery. The walls still girding the hilltop villages of French Provence bear testimony to the dread in which the Corsairs were held.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the European powers felt strong enough to stamp out Algerian lawlessness, which they condemned at the Vienna Congress. In 1816 the British warship *Lord Exmouth* bombarded Algiers. But it was left to France to strike the decisive blow against her unruly African neighbor; the once-impregnable Casbah of Algiers fell easily.

The French did not go into Algeria seeking an Eldorado. The country was too close at hand to inspire illusions. It was not known to possess any min-

eral resources. The land was vast but barren, its sparse population led a seminomad existence and was ridden with disease. The numerous perpetually warring tribes had been left largely to their own devices by the Ottoman Empire, whose regiments of Anatolian militiamen periodically blustered their way through the countryside to collect taxes. In Algiers the Deys, Turkish Regents, ruled by terror, corruption and intrigue, and most of them died at the hands of assassins.

The pacification of Algeria was a slow and painful process. After occupying the country, the French were at first at a loss about what to do with it; while the reactionary generals favored withdrawal of the expeditionary force, the liberal politicians wanted to reclaim the land and its people.

The early French settlers were decimated by sickness. Not even landless French peasants were eager to go to Algeria, and the little immigration that did take place was discouraged under the Second Empire by Napoleon III, who preferred a policy of economic development by large financial corporations. The French had founded only thirty-seven new villages in Algeria by 1871 when a revolt flared up after France's humiliation in the Franco-Prussian War. The rising was

quelled, and in the following thirty years 488 new villages were established under the French Third Republic.

In their administration of Algeria through a Governor-General appointed in Paris, the French vacillated between two trends. One was to work in the direction of assimilating the Moslem population to the political and social status of the people of Metropolitan France so that Algeria would become indistinguishable from any other French province except for its religion; the other tendency was to treat Algeria as a sort of appendage, legally integrated with Metropolitan France but retaining its own distinctive political and social pattern; thus the Moslem masses would be left to go their own traditional way, albeit under French rule.

In 1865, the Moslem Algerians were proclaimed French subjects who could accede to full French citizenship rights if they chose to abide by the French civil code. Very few of them, however, were prepared to renounce their personal status under Koranic law which entitled them, among other things, to be polygamous. The Jews of Algeria, on the other hand, who had no hesitations about emancipation, became naturalized French citizens *en bloc* in 1870 under the terms of the Crémieux decree.

In an attempt to encourage European-type farming among the Moslem peasants, land reform was promulgated. Tribal communal holdings were broken up into family plots. But this measure had disastrous consequences, for the new landowners often failed to hold onto their property and disposed of it cheaply to European speculators.

Meanwhile, as sanitary conditions improved, roads were built and tribal vendettas subsided, the Moslem population grew apace. When the first cen-

sus was taken in Algeria in 1856, there were 2,300,000 Moslems. At the latest count in 1956, their number had risen to 8,500,000. By this time there were also 1,100,000 Algerians of European stock—only half of them of French origin, the rest having come from Spain, Sicily, Malta and other parts of the Mediterranean basin—and 140,000 Jews who, though autochthonous, are looked upon as members of the European community.

The result of French efforts to assimilate the Moslem Algerians is easily measured: 1,300,000 of them today conform to 20th century European-style standards of living, while the remaining 7,200,000 live in much the same way as their forbears.

France did not attach much strategic importance to Algeria until Imperial Germany began to cast a covetous eye on Africa. During the First World War, the Moslem Algerians flocked to the colors to help France in her desperate hour. What the Moslems then aspired to was equality with their French compatriots.

In the inter-war years, a few visionaries preached Algerian national independence, but found little response among the masses; even the educated elite rejected the idea. Characteristically, it was Ferhat Abbas, an educated Moslem, founder in 1938 of the assimilationist U.P.A. (Algerian Popular Union), who declared before he joined the current rebellion, "I have spoken with the living, I have even been to the cemeteries to interrogate the dead, but none could furnish any evidence that there has ever existed an Algerian State."

THE HISTORY of Algeria has to be viewed in the context of the history of the Moghreb, that huge North African "island" bounded by the Mediterranean and the Atlantic and by the

sands of the Sahara and Libyan deserts. In ancient times Phoenician colonists founded the empire of Carthage in the eastern, what is now the Tunisian, part of the Moghreb. This region became, after the Punic wars, the breadbasket of Rome. Ruined by the Vandals who swept into Africa from Gibraltar, the country was briefly restored by the Byzantine Romans. In the seventh century the Arab conquerors surged in from the east. The native Berbers, many of whom had previously been converted from paganism to crude forms of Christianity or Judaism, were forced at sword's point to embrace the new Islamic faith. They established a brilliant colony in Spain, and later in the Middle Ages, when Arabian influence declined, short-lived if resplendent Berber kingdoms arose, now in Morocco, now in Tunisia. Sometimes these extended their dominion over the entire Moghreb. But there was no Algerian entity until in the 16th century the Greek pirate Barbarossa seized the middle part of the Moghreb and turned it into a province of the Ottoman Empire.

When France installed herself in the anarchic Moghreb, she quite naturally annexed Algeria outright, for it was a historical no man's land; she just as naturally imposed only temporary protectorates on Tunisia and Morocco, for these were countries with ancient traditions of statehood. The impact of French civilization has aroused ever-growing social and political aspirations among the Moslems of Algeria. There is every reason to suppose that if these aspirations had been satisfied as they arose, the mass of Algerians would today regard themselves as full-fledged Frenchmen, and rebellion would be unthinkable. Farsighted governments in Paris repeatedly tried to emancipate the Moslem Algerians, but these endeavors were always thwarted by con-

servative French colonists obsessed with notions of their racial superiority and haunted by fears of their vulnerability as a minority community.

The French took the first timid step toward granting home rule in 1898 when Algeria was given a measure of financial autonomy vested in a body known as the Financial Delegations. In the cities and in the more advanced rural areas, municipal councils were set up. But the European Algerians retained political control, having three representatives for every two Moslem Algerians.

In 1936 the French Popular Front Government under Léon Blum presented the Assembly a bill granting unrestricted French citizenship rights to all Moslem Algerians, who were to enjoy the added advantage of maintaining their personal status privileges under Islamic law. The bill was defeated through the intervention of Algerian colonialist pressure-groups. When this reform was finally put into effect ten years later, the disgruntled Algerian Moslems were already asking for more.

In 1947 the French National Assembly decided to confer upon the Algerians a status of semi-autonomy combined with the benefits of the Metropolitan French social security system. Thus, Algerian workers with more than one child were to receive regular State allowances—and large families are the rule among Moslem Algerians. Unemployment compensation and free medical services were also provided. Universal franchise was introduced, and Moslem women were given the vote. While Algeria was to continue sending four Deputies to the National Assembly in Paris, it was to begin to govern itself through its local Parliament which was to assume responsibility for all civil services other than justice and education. A complex system of

checks and balances was instituted. The Algerian Assembly was to take over authority gradually from the French Governor-General who could, however, appeal to the French National Assembly to exercise its power of veto. Dual electoral colleges were set up, one for the European and Moslem elite minorities, the second for the unschooled Moslem majority; representation was to be on an equal basis, so that neither community could dominate the other.

Had these reforms been honestly implemented, they would have carried Algeria a long way toward real autonomy. But they were not implemented. The elections were flagrantly "fixed" by the European Algerian diehards. The ensuing frustration and bitterness prepared the ground for the later revolt.

THE ALGERIAN rebellion against France broke out in November, 1954. Its immediate origins can be traced to a dispute which occurred on the eve of the uprising between the "father" of the Algerian nationalist movement, Messali Hadj, and a group of youthful dissidents.

Without a proper understanding of the cleavage among the Algerian nationalists themselves, it is difficult to make much sense of the Algerian conflict as a whole, or to appreciate why, for instance, the Moslem terrorists have assassinated in Algeria six times as many co-religionists as Christians and Jews, and in Metropolitan France have murdered hundreds of Mohammedans exclusively.

Who is Messali Hadj and what does he stand for? He is—as he told me when I met him in 1946, then as now under house arrest—a poor, untutored Arab who received his first lesson in nationalism as a boy in his native Tlemcen when a playmate of European stock said to him one day: "My father

won't let me ask you into the house anymore, because you're only a native."

As a young man Messali emigrated to Paris where he was, among other things, a carpet-vendor hawking his wares in the cafe terraces at night. He joined the Communist Party, but left it to launch the first Algerian nationalist movement. Imbued, as he claims, with a sense of devotion to liberty, equality and fraternity learned from the French, Messali began to dream of an independent Algeria. He had no ambition to evict the European settlers from Algeria, for he realized that if they were to quit the country at this stage of its development, it would suffer a major economic disaster and technological setback. He wanted his Tlemcen playmate—Messali's lifelong symbol of the European colonist—to continue living in their common Algerian homeland, and to share the same rights and duties with the Moslems within a self-governing Algeria which would maintain close ties with France.

So long as Messali Hadj remained the unchallenged leader, the supreme prophet of the nationalist movement, its disagreements with the French, however violent, were not bedeviled by blind hatred. After the fall of France in 1940, for example, the Messalists made no attempt to exploit her plight.

The Algerian nationalist movement split in 1954 on the issue of whether or not to launch an all-out terrorist campaign. Messali was opposed to this, and his followers have since regrouped themselves in the M.N.A. (Algerian National Movement). The exponents of indiscriminate terror, whose inspiration came from Egypt, broke away and set up the rival F.L.N. (National Liberation Front) to put their plans into effect.

The differences between the two

groups went deeper than ethics or tactics. The Messalists did not wish to prejudice future coexistence with the European community, whose services would be indispensable to an independent Algeria seeking to transform itself into a modern republic. The F.L.N., on the other hand, was bent on the eviction of the European minority regardless of the consequences, for though the F.L.N. leaders talk of Algerian independence, they think in terms of one great Arab—or Pan-Arab—nation “undefiled” by the presence of “infidels” and dominating the whole Near and Middle East from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf.

The F.L.N. chieftains have made it abundantly clear by their deeds that they mean to drive out the European Algerians. In an endeavor to stampede the European settlers into flight, the F.L.N. rebels have deliberately exterminated entire families of Europeans, mutilating the corpses even of children. Refusing to draw a line between “good” and “bad” Europeans, the F.L.N. has particularly singled out for attack those Europeans who have always lived on friendly terms with their Moslem neighbors.

What would be the outcome of a clear-cut F.L.N. victory? As far as one can reasonably foresee, Algeria would attain full sovereignty. French troops and police forces would leave the country. At the same time the vast majority of the 1,200,000 Christians and Jews would have to be evacuated, too, for it would be unthinkable to abandon them to the mercy of triumphant F.L.N. extremists holding sway over 8,500,000 Moslems. The 300,000 Algerian workers in Metropolitan France, deprived of French citizenship through the secession of Algeria, would no doubt be repatriated to their native land. That would signify misery and starvation for their families in Al-

geria who constitute about 2,000,000 dependents and whose principal or sole source of income is the monthly remittance which they now receive from husbands, fathers and sons employed in France.

The 19,400 Algerian farms owned by European settlers would presumably be redistributed among the Moslems. Most of Algeria, however, is desert country. Only one-twentieth of the land is reasonably fertile, and on it live three-quarters of the entire population. The present total agricultural production of Algeria can provide a meager livelihood for 4,000,000 people at most. Commerce and industry would inevitably be dislocated, if not paralyzed, by the departure of the French.

Millions of Algerian Moslems would thus be left destitute—all those who currently subsist on the earnings of their relatives in Metropolitan France, on State allotments for large families, on ex-servicemen's pensions, on employment in, and trade with, the European community, and, indirectly, on the Metropolitan French investments in Algeria, which in the past averaged 150 billion francs annually.

IF FRANCE leaves Algeria, other foreign nations will of course move in to inherit her influence. There will be a rush for the Sahara oil which will mean rich royalties for the new Algerian State; but the royalties alone will not suffice to ward off widespread hunger and want. For several decades, at least, overpopulated and underdeveloped Algeria will need to be constantly subsidized, like a second Jordan on a much vaster scale. Since 1947, France has lavished on North Africa four times as much money as the United States has spent altogether on Point Four economic aid to backward countries.

Yet it may be taken for granted that

no other power or combination of powers will be willing to bear the burden that France carried in Algeria, for none but France has so much at stake there. Should France lose Algeria, she would lose irretrievably her status as a great or near-great Power; she would lose a vital strategic hinterland and manpower reservoir. France would also lose the newly-discovered oil which alone can render her independent of Middle East sources of supply, as well as her immense African territories south of the Sahara, for these would be bound to detach themselves after Algerian secession. She would lose her ability successfully to resist German hegemony in Western Europe. It would be surprising, too, if in the course of her material decline France did not also lose her position as a world center of art and culture.

The prospect of a humiliated France enchants the extremist Algerian nationalists. Unfortunately for them, however, it would also bring irreparable disaster on Algeria. The F.L.N. chieftains must know this; but they look beyond the immediate certainty of independence in dire poverty, to a fancied second Islamic Golden Age, when the Arabs will turn, not northward like their forefathers a thousand years ago, but southward to conquer Black Africa, its still unexploited jungles, its diamond-fields, its uranium and other riches. The Arabs have long been preparing to penetrate the African continent, and Negro slave-traffic-king is an old tradition of theirs—not in vain does Arabic employ the same word for "slave" and "Negro."

The F.L.N. has never said what it intended to do with the independence for which it is clamoring and fighting; but its campaign of physical annihilation of the M.N.A. opposition indicates clearly that an F.L.N. Government would be a one-party authoritarian af-

fair. Would it take the form of neo-feudalism, or Communism, or Fascism? The F.L.N. men do not conceal their sympathy for the German National-Socialist concept of *ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer*, which they render into "one Arab nation, one Islamic empire, one *Bikbachi*." That an underdeveloped country should emerge from an anti-colonialist struggle to espouse some kind of Fascism may seem absurd, but the grotesque and unexpected can happen—not even Karl Marx foresaw that underdeveloped countries could and would be the first to go Communist.

As the Communists see it, a prematurely independent Algeria is bound to end up in the Soviet camp. Should this occur, the Soviet bloc would outflank Western Europe from the south and be far advanced on the road to world mastery. The French and Algerian Communist Parties—the latter's elite is composed of fewer Moslems than Christians and Jews—therefore give all-out support to the F.L.N., which is not itself Communist-minded.

On the other hand, Washington and London, though allied to France, appear convinced that they can best serve the Western cause by surreptitiously helping the F.L.N. to rid Algeria of French "colonialism." It is reported that the State Department favors the establishment of a Moghreb Confederation of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Such a federation would not appreciably improve the economic situation of the three countries, whose inadequate resources are parallel, not complementary. The three will not be any better off if they start interchanging their figs and dates, oranges and lemons.

Morocco and Tunisia, which are not as terribly overpopulated as Algeria, are less inclined to extremism; but should the three link up, it is more than likely that the most fanatical and

dynamic element, the F.L.N., will dominate the others.

TO RECOGNIZE the complexity of the Algerian problem is not to refute the argument that it would be morally indefensible to deny Algeria the right to self-government. During the past decade the march of once-subjugated peoples towards sovereignty has become well-nigh irresistible. At the same time, it should not be overlooked that in an ever-shrinking world there is an ever-growing interdependence among all nations. The real question is precisely how to bring about Algerian self-government without major damage to the Algerians themselves, to their neighbors and to the whole delicate fabric of international relations. The solution has to be looked for in the bloodstained realities of the Algerian drama.

The nationalist revolt in Algeria began on November 1, 1954, with a series of small but well-coordinated terrorist attacks in the Aurès and Great Kabylia mountains. On the same day, Cairo Radio, which evidently had advance information of the outbreak, broadcast a communiqué proclaiming triumphantly that the people of Algeria had "risen in an insurrectionary struggle for liberty, Arabism and Islam."

Cairo may well have believed that these first sparks of violence would start an insurrectionary blaze among the Algerian masses, but the country as a whole remained calm. Ten relatively uneventful months passed, and then, on the night of August 20, inflamed Moslem villagers butchered seventy-one European neighbors, the youngest victim a nine-month old baby. On this occasion, the rebels also slaughtered twenty-one co-religionists who had refused to join them. Again there followed a lull. The Arab and Berber population as a whole remained un-

responsive to the fiery calls to *jihad*, holy war against the infidels.

Then the F.L.N. went to work systematically to rally the Moslems to its banner, and wherever friendly persuasion failed, intimidation was used. Day after day, throughout Algeria, Arab and Berber men and women were found slain; some were hanged, others had their throats slit or their bellies ripped open. The F.L.N. vented its fury not so much on fawning pro-French Moslems—most of these were opportunists willing to collaborate with whichever side seemed the stronger—but on nationalists who refused to defect from the M.N.A.

The F.L.N. campaign of subversion by terror made swift progress in the hinterland. The French forces, civil and military, were chiefly concentrated in the towns and in selected rural areas. The greater part of Algeria was not, and never had been, regularly policed or properly administered. All the F.L.N. had to do to establish its own shadow government over vast tracts of territory was to impose its will on the Moslem population.

The F.L.N. had taken up arms in the belief that France would not put up a strong fight following her defeat in Indo-China and her capitulation in Morocco and Tunisia. This assumption appeared at first well-founded. For over a year, successive governments in Paris gave little attention to the Algerian trouble. They neither sent adequate reinforcements to quell the revolt, nor introduced substantial political reforms to win back the loyalty of disaffected Moslems. The French politicians were busy with their customary squabbles. At the end of 1955, Prime Minister Edgar Faure dissolved Parliament and staged a snap general election whose purpose was to foil the Radical leader Pierre Mendès-France's efforts to constitute a new coalition of

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Left-wing parties known as the Republican Front.

The still incoherent Republican Front won a partial success at the polls, and formed the new government under the Premiership, not of Mendès-France as had been expected, but of the Socialist Guy Mollet. The Republican Front was pledged to restore early peace in Algeria, and Mollet flew to Algiers to examine the situation on the spot.

On February 6, 1956, as Mollet went to lay a wreath at the Algiers war memorial, he was met with volleys of rotten tomatoes and insults from a mob of European colonists who were convinced that he had come to knuckle under to the rebels. For several days Mollet sat immured in the Governor-General's Winter Palace, listening to the fears and hopes of an endless succession of Algerian delegations. He decided to send in 300,000 more French troops, army reservists and conscripts, on a mission of pacification.

Only the Communists opposed this measure and organized riotous protest demonstrations at the railway stations as trainloads of troops left for Algeria. Many Communists among the conscripts tried to foment open mutiny. But the young soldiers, even Communists, desisted soon after they crossed the Mediterranean and saw for themselves the work of the F.L.N. Word went back to the men's relatives at home, and Communist disorders in France dwindled. Even Mollet's most assiduous detractors, both on the Left and on the Right, acknowledged that his policy of firmness in Algeria enjoyed the wholehearted support of the great majority of Frenchmen.

WITHIN THE Republican Front a quarrel developed as to what course pacification should take. The Mendèsists held that the army should

serve as a broom to sweep out not only the F.L.N. extremists, but also the colonialist diehards who by their past obstruction of liberal reforms had alienated the Moslem masses. Metropolitan France should send her sons into Algeria as liberators, to liberate the Moslem masses from their ultra-nationalist and European oppressors alike, said the Mendèsists, and she should introduce generous reforms straightway, in order to produce the psychological shock which alone would make possible an early peace.

But Guy Mollet preferred a more prudent, step-by-step policy. As he saw it, the primary objective of the expeditionary force was, by its mere presence in Algeria, to reassure the friends of France and to dishearten the rebels who would surely realize that they could not stand up to the might of a modern army. After pacification had been achieved, there would be general elections under international supervision, to ensure fair play. Then France would meet the democratically elected representatives of the Algerian people to negotiate a new status for Algeria.

At secret meetings in Italy and Yugoslavia, Mollet's three-stage plan was submitted to F.L.N. envoys, and these rejected it out of hand insisting that France must first grant Algeria independence; only then would there be a truce and in the subsequent negotiations to regulate relations between the two States, France would have to recognize the F.L.N. as the sole authorized spokesman of the Algerian people as a whole. These terms, which amounted to French unconditional surrender, Mollet could not accept. He objected especially to the F.L.N. pretension that it was entitled to speak in the name of all Algerians. Why, he asked, did the F.L.N. shun elections, if it was so sure of popular backing? To hand Algeria over to this ruthless

terrorist organization, which had assassinated 6,000 Moslems and 1,000 Europeans in Algeria and nearly 1,000 Moslems in Metropolitan France, would be to deliver the country to a totalitarian regime without regard for the people's wishes, he maintained.

THE F.L.N. was not impressed by the arrival of French reinforcements. As a warning to the Moslem population, the F.L.N. murdered two-hundred Moslem civilians in a score of villages around Sétif on the "Red Night" of April 21, 1956. The F.L.N. commanders adapted their strategy to the changed conditions. Their only chance of victory now lay not in a wildfire insurrectionary movement which, in any case, they had failed to arouse, but in a trial of endurance with Metropolitan France until the latter would be exhausted, morally or financially. If the bloodshed lasted long enough, France must surely yield at last; world public opinion would force her to do so, the F.L.N. reasoned.

The F.L.N. tactics are reportedly based on a manual by Mao-Tse-Tung. Their aim is to win control over the population, not to worst the French army in the field. It would be folly for the *fellaghas* or rebel forces, consisting of some 30,000 full-time and 120,000 part-time recruits, to seek a showdown with the 400,000 admirably armed French troops and 100,000 local Home Guards and police. The *fellaghas* therefore fight back when attacked, and engage in guerilla forays whenever an opportunity presents itself, but their main task is to set up and maintain a clandestine F.L.N. administration, a State within the State, under the noses of the French.

The *fellaghas* operate in small bands, usually composed of about fifty men. Each band has a political commissar who, unarmed and outwardly indis-

tinguishable from any wayfaring peasant, makes the rounds of the villages to announce that the hour for *jihād* has struck and that the F.L.N. with Allah's aid will smite any Moslem who holds aloof from the liberation movement. If the villagers are obdurate, a few of them are killed by F.L.N. commandos, and the rest are then more amenable. An underground F.L.N. administration is installed in the village and collects taxes, feeds and clothes the *fellagha* band lurking in the region, furnishes new recruits, mobilizes irregulars who interrupt their ordinary employment to take part in an ambush or commit sabotage. As the village compromises itself more and more with the French, it comes to identify itself psychologically with the F.L.N.

The French High Command thus finds itself in a quandary. It cannot easily get at the *fellaghas* who hide in the mountains and who, at the approach of a French patrol, often discard their uniforms to masquerade as simple peasants. On the other hand, the army is under orders from Paris to refrain from large-scale punitive action against villages known to be under F.L.N. domination. The rebellion could undoubtedly be crushed in a matter of weeks if the French issued an ultimatum to these villages: "Get rid of the F.L.N., or be reduced to a shambles." The blandishments and knives of the F.L.N. are after all less formidable than the French artillery, tanks, bombers. To carry conviction, however, the French would have to resort to extensive and indiscriminate massacres. Pacification would then degenerate into genocidal repression. Neither Guy Mollet nor his successors were willing to stoop to this, nor is it likely that the people of France would lend themselves to such a policy.

In their fight against the F.L.N. assaults, the French forces have been

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scattered over the land in little knots forming a sort of fisherman's net. But Algeria covers an area of 2,200,000 square kilometers, and the *fellaghas* are able most of the time to weave their way in and out between the French military posts.

The French are often ignorant of what is going on in their immediate vicinity. Few of them speak the local Arabic and Berber dialects. They can never be sure what lies behind the inscrutable smiles with which they are greeted almost everywhere. When they are met with bullets, they hit back wildly. The culprits may escape, and the innocents may suffer. Bewilderment and fear tend to beget hatred and savagery.

TO MAKE a success of pacification and recover the initiative, the French must gain the sympathy of the Moslem masses and embolden the population to shake off the *fellagha* gangs. In a directive dated August 18, 1956, the French Minister in Algeria, Robert Lacoste, enjoined "the troops, wherever they may be, to seek individual, personal and human contact with the Moslems. . . . It is only by helping the Moslems to better their living conditions, by building and working side by side with them that we shall win their friendship. . . ."

A military "love-thy-neighbor" policy is easier to proclaim than to carry out. But, beginning February, 1957, General Paris de Bollardi re, commanding a desolate mountain sector south of Algiers, showed that it could be done. He created an elite body of voluntary commandos who went out to live with the Moslem peasants. Each commando unit was composed of five men, including an interpreter. They took a calculated risk. A larger commando unit of one hundred men could defend itself against all comers, but it would defeat

its own purpose by overawing the Moslems. And again, by splitting up into groups the same one hundred men could visit twenty times as many villages.

The Black Commandos, as they were called, were only lightly armed and carried no rations, going as paying guests among the Moslem villagers who proved unfailingly hospitable. The groups took note of local conditions, but did not press their hosts with indiscreet questions. Before long, amicable relationships were formed. The commandos became the eyes and ears of the hitherto purblind and half-deaf combat troops.

General de Bollardi re also organized social and medical services for the Moslem population in his sector, and launched a public works project employing 2,000 Moslems. He was planning to give employment to all the 5,000 unemployed Moslems in the area, when the whole venture collapsed. His experiment in pacification-by-kindness, while true to the spirit and the letter of Lacoste's instructions, had aroused the ire of extremist European Algerians. The general's immediate superiors were hostile to the plan, and he was forced to resign after being reprimanded before his own men by the Under-Secretary of State for Defense, Max Lejeune, a Socialist who felt that the role of nursemaid to the Moslem populace was beneath the dignity of the army.

The general's misfortunes did not end there. One of his former Black Commando officers, Lt. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, who in civilian life is editor of the Mend sist weekly *L'Express*, was indicted on a charge of "attempting to demoralize the army" with his writings. General de Bollardi re issued a statement in praise of Servan-Schreiber, and for this "act of indiscipline" he was confined to a fortress.

The general is still in disgrace, but his ideas are being more and more widely applied. The expeditionary force in Algeria from the outset has had little to do in the strictly military sense. Last year it used up a quantity of ammunition which a force of comparable size in the World War would have expended in a day. It has now become common practice for French officers to go from village to village in the wake of the F.L.N. political commissars and talk things over with the peasants to see how good neighborliness can be established. The army is also undertaking constructive work pertaining to the arts not of war but of peace.

A STRIKING example among others, of the new system of pacification is to be seen at Meshta Kebira, in the Constantine province sector commanded by Colonel de Boissieux, a son-in-law of Gen. de Gaulle. This village lies on the southern slopes of the Eastern Algerian coastal range. It is too small to be found on an ordinary map; civilization had shunned Meshta Kebira for centuries. There was a time, 1,500 years ago, when Meshta Kebira knew the art of fine living under Roman rule. Then the Arab hosts swept through the Moghreb; irrigation broke down, soil erosion set in, the land became barren. At Meshta Kebira the only visible traces of its former glory are the beautifully carved tombstones and slabs of marble from ruins of Roman villas which the peasants still use as building material for their hovels—they simply lay one stone on top of another, for in these parts the people have not yet learned, or have forgotten, how to plaster their walls.

Until a few months ago, there was no road to Meshta Kebira. Its inhabitants lived off the land, whose surface they scratched with their archaic iron-

tipped ploughs. They engaged in a little barter, had no money, and seldom went to the nearest fair held a day's march away. They were out of touch with the outside world.

When the F.L.N. emissaries came to Meshta Kebira, they were well received. But the *fellaghas* governed Meshta Kebira with a heavy hand, and after a local clash in which seven rebels and two French soldiers were killed, the village elders came to the French begging *amman*, pardon.

Fearing F.L.N. vengeance Meshta Kebira asked the French to establish a permanent military post in the village. Here, as in hundreds of other places, the French said it could not be done for lack of manpower. Finally, however, an ingenious arrangement was devised: Meshta Kebira was shifted from its inaccessible mountain eyrie to the plateau where the villagers own land, and a French unit of thirty men—later reduced to ten—was stationed.

Civil administration of the village was entrusted to a Rural Administrative Section officer, Lt. Moriko. Disposing of an adequate budget—his bill for wages alone comes to 2,000,000 francs a month—Lt. Moriko, who is an agricultural engineer, set the villagers to work changing the face of the land. With the peasant's consent, their holdings were redistributed. Formerly, by virtue of the ancient tribal laws, the soil was divided into minute and widely scattered patches, hedged in with stones. A family might have several such patches miles distant one from the other. The hedges have now been removed. Every family has been assigned a single tract. The rich subsoil, which had never seen the light of day, has been ploughed up with a tractor. Long straight ridges of earth have been banked up by a bulldozer to serve as barriers against erosion. Irrigation channels are being dug, for a large

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Next summer, Meshta Kebira should be reaping a harvest ten to twenty times richer than ever in its history, as a result of the abundant water, improved tillage, and increased area of land under cultivation (fifty hectares now against a bare fifteen a year ago). As wage-earners, the villagers are already prospering beyond their wildest dreams. The solitary little store, which used to stock only paraffin and soap and salt, today sells everything from sugar, cheese and sweetmeats to clothes, footwear and even bicycles.

Last May, a *fellagha* band raided the village and abducted eight men. It was feared that this blow would shatter Meshta Kebira's confidence in the French, and that the villagers might now turn to the F.L.N. for *amman*. But this did not happen. A young Arab, who had been ordered by the *fellaghas* on pain of death to assassinate Lt. Moriko, gave himself up. To this young man and nine others, the French issued rifles—so a *harka*, a Moslem self-defense unit, was formed at Meshta Kebira.

SCORES of similar *harkas* have sprung up in different parts of Algeria in recent months—an indication of the Moslem population's weariness with F.L.N. impositions, arbitrary edicts and penalties, such as the rebel ban on attendance in schools and the throwing of bombs at children who go to school, the prohibition on smoking and the cutting-off of offenders' noses.

Most *harkas* mount a day-and-night guard in their respective villages, but some go out with French troops to hunt down the *fellagha* bands. There is one *harka* composed of Algerian fac-

tory workers from Paris who volunteered to go home and fight alongside the French after the F.L.N. had murdered 303 men—the entire adult male population—of Melouza, a village which owed allegiance to the M.N.A.

While complete pacification is not yet in sight, F.L.N. terrorism had been eradicated in the large cities of Algeria by last autumn. Only a year ago the situation in Algiers had been critical; every month, ninety people on the average were being killed and hundreds maimed by F.L.N. thugs. There were also murderous outbursts of counter-terrorism by European extremists. The French resorted to "third degree" police methods to track down the F.L.N. killers—suspects were "grilled" until they informed on their accomplices. In this way, the F.L.N. terrorist organization in the cities was smashed, for the present at least.

Ugly rumors spread that torture chambers had been set up in Algiers, that a "little Gestapo"—operating outside the normal channels of justice—had sprung up, partly staffed by Germans of the Foreign Legion who were formerly with Himmler's secret police. On several occasions not only Moslem nationalists, but also Christian and Jewish liberals who had incurred the displeasure of the colonialist diehards, disappeared mysteriously.

The average citizen in Algiers submitted to this state of affairs which kept him and his family safe from F.L.N. terror. But progressive politicians, intellectuals and churchmen in France loudly protested that acquiescence in this situation might prove fatal to French democracy and was a blot on French humanist traditions. The government set up a commission of eminent jurists and humanists to investigate alleged violations of human rights in Algeria. Its unquestionably impartial report shows that abuses have occurred

on the French side, although they were the exception not the rule. Steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of inhumanity. On the other hand, the report establishes that F.L.N. atrocities, such as the practice of killing children by battering their brains out against a wall, have been perpetrated quite systematically all the time and all over the country.

F.L.N. terrorism has now become most virulent in Metropolitan France. Operating singly or in squads, killers have attacked fellow-Moslems with knives, pistols, tommy-guns and hand-grenades in cafes, hotels, on the streets and in the subway stations. The majority of Algerian workers in France are Messalists, and there is a strong M.N.A. trade union movement, which the F.L.N. is trying to wipe out. The two rival nationalist parties are waging gang war to the death. In Paris, as many as half a dozen bodies of M.N.A. and F.L.N. partisans are picked up daily. The murder campaign is confined to Moslem Algerians. A few unlucky Frenchmen have fallen victim to stray bullets.

In some ways, the F.L.N. rebellion has done more to disrupt life in Metropolitan France than in Algeria. The government has dangerously strained the national economy to maintain the military effort. The treasure it has been pouring out has impoverished Metropolitan France—and produced an unprecedented boom in Algeria where in the past year more dwellings and factories have shot up, more work has been done, more money earned, and bigger harvests gathered, than ever before.

In Algiers, where the population has increased by about thirty per cent (from 380,000 to 500,000) since the outbreak of the rebellion, 12,300 new low-rental flats have gone up. An eighteen-floor skyscraper has been built and

a team of international architects has drawn up plans to clear the slums, to construct a new residential suburb and to build a combined railway and helicopter station. The city's annual budget of twenty billion francs allows for the implementation of these projects.

The money situation is easy. Bank deposits have increased by thirty per cent, postal savings by twenty per cent. The number of privately-owned automobiles has risen by thirty per cent. The first oil pipeline from the Sahara to the Mediterranean coast is already being laid. Government-sponsored schemes to industrialize the country have attracted keen interest; now that cheap energy in the form of natural gas from the Sahara is available, production costs will be lower in Algeria than in Metropolitan France.

On the whole, the French in Algeria are more optimistic than their compatriots in Metropolitan France. The European Algerians are convinced that the F.L.N. has been whipped and must sooner or later give up. They assert, not without reason, that the revolt would long since have collapsed but for the aid which it receives from abroad, from diplomats and adventurers, from Soviet agents and American oilmen, from neo-Nazis and liberals, from the Arab world in general and from neighboring Tunisia and Morocco in particular.

THE FLOW of weapons, the lifeblood of the F.L.N., which used to come chiefly from Egypt, now comes from Tunisia and to a lesser extent from Morocco. Colonel Nasser temporarily faded out of the Algerian picture when he was defeated by the French and British at Port Said and by the Israelis in the Sinai wilderness a year ago. For several days, when it seemed that the dictator of Cairo was finished, the

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F.L.N. faltered and halted its warlike activities. Moslem ex-servicemen in Algeria began wearing their French war decorations once more. Then Moscow and Washington between them saved Nasser and the Algerian rebellion resumed. However, Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba took advantage of the interlude to assume control over the supply caravans carrying arms through his territory to the *fellaghas* in Algeria.

Bourguiba is himself a moderate pro-Western Arab politician. He is shrewd enough to realize that an F.L.N. triumph would bring extremists to the fore throughout the Moghreb, and that he would then probably find himself supplanted by his worst enemy, Salah Ben Youssef, who is at present an exile in Cairo and who speaks the same Pan-Arab language as the F.L.N. leaders. But Bourguiba also knows that he would not live long were he to declare Tunisia out of bounds to the F.L.N. agents (not only Algerians but also several hundred Egyptians and some Syrians) who have established in his country a network of depots, training camps, hospitals, rest centers and other amenities for the *fellaghas*. He dare not trifle with the thousands of armed F.L.N. rebels who have made an "inviolable sanctuary" for themselves on the Tunisian side of the Algerian border.

King Mohammed V of Morocco is in much the same predicament. His throne would rock if ever the F.L.N. came to dominate the Moghreb. On the other hand, both Arab leaders are afraid that if France scores a decisive victory over the F.L.N., her colonialist diehards may encroach on the still precarious sovereignty of Morocco and Tunisia. Bourguiba and Mohammed V would therefore like to see the Algerian conflict end in a draw, and have offered to mediate the conflict.

The French government and public opinion—with the exception of the Mendèsists—have looked askance at this mediation offer, which seems to suggest that France should negotiate with the F.L.N. chieftains as the sole accredited representatives of the Algerian people. Were France to do this, she would be bestowing upon the F.L.N. a moral authority which it does not possess and which it is in fact trying to usurp by the physical liquidation of Moslem Algerians opposed to its ideology. The way would then be open to F.L.N. supremacy in Algeria, to the sorrow not only of France and the Algerian people, but also of Bourguiba and Mohammed V, and of those Western countries who regard themselves as the heirs of France in the Moghreb.

There are certain Frenchmen, not only Communists but also Conservatives, who favor immediate and total French withdrawal from Algeria. Their viewpoint has been stated by Prof. Raymon Aron in his much-quoted book *La Tragédie Algérienne*. "Why," he asks, "should the French take it upon themselves to cover indefinitely the deficits of the Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan budgets? If they are logical, the French will prefer to leave this task to the Americans. . . ."

France will be better off investing in her own Metropolitan territory the money now set aside for North Africa, Aron argues. The European minority cannot be abandoned to their fate in an independent, F.L.N.-ruled Algeria, he says, and therefore proposes that the settlers should be repatriated to France, and that the 300,000 Algerian workers now in Metropolitan France should be repatriated to Algeria. The implications of his reasoning may fairly be summed up thus: leave Algeria to the Algerians! Let them wallow in their own mess! Will ensuing chaos

jeopardize vital Western interests? The American critics of French colonialism will have asked for it, let *them* worry!

There is a possible oversight in Prof. Aron's thesis. The European Algerians might well refuse to be "repatriated" from the land where they were born and where five generations of their forbears lived. Against the eventuality of a French withdrawal, they have elaborated a plan—commonly referred to as the "Israel solution"—to partition Algeria and to set up an independent state of their own in a coastal enclave stretching from Algiers to Oran.

IS THERE a happier way out of the Algerian impasse? Is there any means of reconciling the legitimate aspirations of Algeria with the legitimate interests of France?

The quintessence of the matter is that no solution will be sound morally or materially if it does not safeguard friendly coexistence between the various communities of multi-racial Algeria; such coexistence will be a sham unless everything is done to raise the social and cultural standing of the Moslem Algerians to the level of the European Algerians. This will take time, and meanwhile the Moslem Algerians are entitled to exercise the fullest measure of political self-determination consistent with safeguarding friendly coexistence between the communities of multi-racial Algeria.

The practical formula which satisfies these requirements is an Algeria governing itself within a Franco-Algerian Confederation; unstinting French economic and technical aid to Algeria to raise the whole country as rapidly as possible to 20th century

standards of living; France to remain in charge of security in Algeria, at least until such time as the possibility of strife between the various communities has disappeared through elimination of their inequalities.

The *loi-cadre*—skeleton law—for Algeria, adopted after much hesitation by the French National Assembly is a step in the right direction. Each Algerian province is to have its own local legislative and executive body. These will elect representatives to a Federal Algerian Parliament, which in turn will form a Federal Algerian Government. There will be universal suffrage, and a single electoral college in place of the former two-college system which discriminated between socially advanced and backward Algerians. To ensure that racial minorities will be able to make their voices heard, each community will elect delegates to a consultative assembly—a sort of senate—attached to every provincial legislature and to the Federal Parliament. France will retain responsibility for security in Algeria, and will have the right to veto any measures—for instance, secession—which the Federal Algerian Parliament or government might wish to adopt in violation of the written constitution.

On the economic side, the French government has worked out a ten-year plan for the industrialization of Algeria at an annual cost of 470 billion francs, a tenth of the average French budget.

To make a reality of these projects, France will have to exert herself mightily—and she will need more co-operation from her Allies than she has been getting heretofore.

books and authors

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By HANS MEYERHOFF

THE NAKED GOD, by HOWARD FAST. FREDERICK A. PRAEGER, 197 pp. \$3.50.

THE WRITER or intellectual in the Communist Party presents a special case. He is not "with it" for material reasons. He is not moved by economic interests as masses of workers in other countries have been; he does not respond to the concrete appeal that Communism has had for racial minorities and colonial peoples; he is not even a cog in the party machinery as a paid functionary; and if he is not an official member of "the new class" as described in the recent book by Djilas, he does not gain power as a tangible reward.

Thus the intellectual's commitment to the cause of Communism is primarily ideological. If it is freely made and projected against the total self, such a commitment may represent a deep emotional and existential investment. The free choice exercised in joining the Communist Party may acquire the quality of a religious act. And the anomalous situation created by this act may be transformed into a profound personal drama.

The stage is set for a kind of spiritual struggle: in some respects, Communism still derives theoretical strength from the intellectual heritage of its founding fathers. It has retained, as part of the tradition of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, the belief that the free, class-transcending commitment of the intellectual is one of the most significant and noble acts on behalf of the revolutionary cause. On the level of Communist "reality," however, *i.e.*, in the actual struggle to seize and preserve political power, the writer and intellectual can function only as a stooge and lackey. His

role is either purely ornamental or strictly instrumental. Thus the free act of commitment on the ideological plane is invariably converted, on the plane of political reality, into a state of bondage. The intellectual who has committed himself to the ideals of the cause discovers that a mind so committed is a "captive mind," as Czeslaw Milocz aptly described this process of self-deception.

The same theme runs through *The Naked God* by Howard Fast. There is nothing in Mr. Fast's story that has not been told before, and many times; yet, I think, it is still worth reading as a belated reminder of certain aspects of the Communist problem which we tend to overlook in a purely political context.

For Mr. Fast has tried to write a kind of parable, not a political analysis. Reading his public confession one gets the impression that the Communist phase in Mr. Fast's life was not a chapter in recent political history at all. It was not a matter of belonging or not belonging to a political organization; it was not a transaction conditional upon terms set and binding for specific, man-made, political purposes. It was something like a conversion, an unconditional commitment to a transcendent God, an apocalyptic struggle between the illusion of salvation and the reality of damnation. In spirit, imagery, and emotional tone, *The Naked God* is cut from the same cloth as Whittaker Chambers' *Witness*.

There is the life that "was meaningless, hopeless, degraded, and without direction." There is the sudden "vision of sanity, order, hope." "In all truth, one sells his soul, accepting the proposition that thus will mankind be redeemed"—and once committed to this "faith in the supreme struggle of men of good will," one is sold. One is cut off, by one's own choice, from the reality outside the Party; one is cut off, by

the passionate power of one's faith, from the reality inside the party.

THE RESULT is a stark and cruel dilemma: on the one hand, there is the faith in "peace," "social justice," "the brotherhood of man," "a world-wide entity of love and creativity in which life is neither wasted nor despised." On the other hand, there is the reality of the writer's existence in the Communist Party where he is manipulated, debased, and crushed "by enormous forces which he can resist only to the destruction of himself as a writer." To the outside world, in this country and abroad, Howard Fast became the foremost, and perhaps the most respectable, spokesman on behalf of the Communist cause. Inside the Party, he was a member of an intellectual minority group in charge of the *Daily Worker*, helplessly at odds with the official leadership and incapable of reaching the rank and file. Inside the Party, Mr. Fast's own work as a writer seems to have had no other effect than to set into motion, with uncanny stupidity, the official apparatus for censorship and denunciation. Every work he published earned him nothing but indignities, abuse, and abject humiliation.

One way out of this dilemma is to envisage the world, as Mr. Fast does, in terms of a simple Manichean dualism. Thus there is the "membership, self-sacrificing, dedicated, and motivated by a vision" and the leadership that is bankrupt, brutal, and depraved; there is the "nobility" of the cause and the "ignoble horror" that it begets; there is the image of "St. George" fighting the "dragon of hate and horror." In short, there are writers (or yogis) and commissars, saints and sinners, children of light and children of darkness. "I see most things too simply, too much in blacks and whites."

A mind so divided tends to save its sanity by rationalizing its own contradictions in terms of a religious martyrdom. First, there is the martyrdom of the Communist missionary in the pagan, capitalist world; then, there is the crucifixion of the pure in heart by the forces of evil in the Party. "All of us," Mr. Fast writes, speaking for the small band of faithful gathered

in the office of the *Daily Worker* on the fateful day of reckoning when their illusions finally came crashing down on them with the publication of the now famous report in which Commissar Khrushchev exposed *The Naked God*, "all of us had made great sacrifices, accepted war and prison and poverty, faced death on one occasion or another. Here were brilliant careers given up, success and wealth bypassed by some, respect and honor abandoned by others, all of us together in a tiny minority group that had been hounded and persecuted for a decade; all of us driven by and wedded to the splendid dream of brotherhood and justice."

A tiresome tale, you will say, just another installment in the long record of the intellectual's corruption and self-deception under Communism. Why did Howard Fast join the Communist Party only in 1943 when so many others like himself had already left it "in bitterness and disillusionment"? Why didn't he see and read the evidence accumulating around him? Why didn't he believe it? Why did he submit, masochistically, to every indignity and humiliation? Why didn't he simply say, I have had enough—and walk out?

Tiresome questions. If there is any merit in asking them once again, it is to be reminded of the fact that they have an entirely different meaning in our universe of discourse than they had in the spiritual drama reenacted by Mr. Fast. For it is clear that his unconditional commitment to the cause was an article of faith. And articles of faith are rarely submitted to empirical proof. One may resign from a political party; but one does not walk out on a dream; one does not break one's allegiance to a faith for reasons of logic and ordinary evidence. One does not desert one's God even though The Grand Inquisitor has replaced Him. "For fifteen centuries we have been wrestling with Thy freedom," The Grand Inquisitor said; "but now it is ended and over for good." It took Stalin only fifteen years.

IT COMES as a surprise to rediscover, at this late stage of the cold war, that there are still people in our midst whose political commitment transforms them into

souls "possessed"; and it is rather embarrassing to reenter this world of Dostoevskian epigones. But I guess we must accept the fact that Mr. Fast depicts a legitimate type of person for whom joining the Communist Party was a kind of baptism, a conversion to a new-born man, for whom expulsion was identical with excommunication, and for whom handing in one's party card was an act of apostasy, a fall from grace. The cause was shrouded in charisma; and the charismatic powers descended from a God unknown. The failure of Communism, therefore, was always a manifestation of *The God That Failed* or *The Naked God*. Even if we make allowance for the element of self-dramatization (which is characteristic of every public confession) and remember that Koestler, Chambers, Kravchenko, and Fast are pale shadows of Ivan Karamazov and Kirillov, this document has an authentic ring.

The greater the power of belief, the greater the power of disbelief. He who sees everything in God sees not that he is blind. "I refused to believe"—Mr. Fast refused to believe everything that threatened to shake his faith. "My own stupidity was inexhaustible; my own inability to learn was beyond correction." It sounds pathetic, this inverted form of Communist "self-criticism," but he knew all along that he was committing suicide as an intellectual. In this he was not alone. A friend and comrade of his who went to the Soviet Union on behalf of the Jewish Commission of the Communist Party returned with the "truth" that "some fifteen million people felt the direct effect of the terror in prison and concentration camp" and that "some five million of them died." In a surrealistic climax, he remains a "loyal Communist." "I also refuse to believe it," he confesses; "only—I know it is true."

Surely, this is a chapter from the pathology of religious faith, the product of a fateful dialectic of its own: as the reality of party life becomes more and more unbearable, and the evidence confirming this reality more and more threatening, the powers of rationalization increase correspondingly, the need to affirm the validity of the noble dream becomes more and

more desperate. The betrayal of faith in reality intensifies the passion to justify the original commitment. The need for salvation throws the faithful at the mercy of the powers that damn him. Clinging to the illusion of salvation in *ecclesia*, the writer becomes a helpless, captive victim of the commissar.

For, in this drama of selling and losing one's soul, the threat of expulsion is the most powerful weapon at the disposal of the party priest. Expulsion signifies "the sword of excommunication." "Without the power and religiosity of expulsion, the Communist Party could not exist as it is Expulsion was akin to eternal damnation, the body alive but the soul already dead for eternity." I had forgotten that the revolutionary movement resounded with these apocalyptic trumpet calls. No wonder it was impossible to hear the small voice of reason. No wonder Mr. Fast "was determined not to be cast out with the curse"—of Lucifer. To resign did not mean to assert one's freedom, dignity, and responsibility; to be expelled was not the deliverance from a nightmare. Mr. Fast's own "nightmare" was "that whosoever left [the Party] discarded all hope of salvation." There was no place to go; there was no place to hide. Abandon hope, all ye who leave. . . .

SOME day, beyond this long winter of our discontent, a future student of our society will place this aspect of Communism into the larger context where Dostoevski and Nietzsche put it. However tortured and distorted, it is but another variation on the theme of the twilight of the Gods and the dawn of nihilism. He will need documents like *The Naked God* to throw some light upon the complex human dynamics behind political action: the mechanism by which intellectuals inflicted mental blindness upon themselves; the paralysis which kept them from breaking with their faith even when they did see the truth; the "agony" by which they dramatized their fate; the overwhelming need for a public confession after they had fallen from grace; and the general tend-

ency to embrace some other "faith" after the exposure of *The Naked God*.

He will need to take account also of the atmosphere of guilt and fear in which this private drama was acted out. Mr. Fast did not commit murder; he is not directly responsible for the crimes perpetrated by the commissar. His guilt is that of the unhappy, divided consciousness which Communism was supposed to heal. His guilt is that of betraying himself as a writer and intellectual—the refusal to believe what he knew to be true, the unconditional surrender of intellectual integrity and moral imagination. "If you and Paul Robeson had raised your voices in 1949, Itzik Feffer"—a Jewish-Soviet poet who was murdered by the regime because he tried to intercede on behalf of another Jewish writer, David Bergelson, who was tortured and killed—"... would be alive today," Fast was told. It is a terrible thing to live with these memories. It is just as terrible to confess that one imitated the commissar. For, as in a concentration camp, the logic of party life reduces the victim to the values of his dreaded masters. As Howard Fast was attacked, abused, and brow-beaten, so "I thought salvation in my own power to impale."

There was no "internal peace" or "happiness" in this act of total self-alienation. There were "horror, hurt, anger"—and fear. Fear stalks every page of this private drama: fear of the world outside the Party; fear of the toll exacted by the Party; fear not to step forward and make one's pledge of faith; fear to learn the truth; fear to lose one's powers of disbelieving the truth; fear of one's comrades and fear for one's comrades; fear of being cut off from humanity; and fear of being cast out from the Party; in short, the fear of God and the fear of living without a God. "In the end, there is fear"—always fear, guilt, and shame. I did not realize what a paroxysm of masochistic emotions is generated in this desperate gamble of saving one's soul at the price of losing oneself as a human being.

It is often said that what our age needs most is a new commitment. Reading docu-

ments like *The Naked God* makes me doubt it. We may all commit ourselves to some madhouse, run under different management and auspices, but still mad. I prefer to pray quietly for the non-committed man.

Colonialism Versus . . . ?

By JOEL CARMICHAEL

LIEUTENANT IN ALGERIA, by JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 231 pp. \$3.50.

THE CONFLICT in Algeria has distilled, so to speak, the essence of the social and political turbulence that has beset our epoch for the past forty years. In the public mind everywhere the issues involved—colonialism, imperialism, nationalism, Communism, racialism, pan-Islam, Backward Africa, etc., etc.—constitute a gamut of the ills the world as a whole is failing so signally to cope with.

In France, of course, hamstrung and suffocating painfully in a maelstrom of profoundly contradictory political and economic currents, the Algerian question has brought to a head all the infections that have been fermenting in the body politic since the French Revolution itself: all the national myths of France, a goodly part of her creative energies, and the accumulated hatreds of generations seem epitomized in the bitter struggle in North Africa that has inflamed Frenchmen more than any other phenomenon since the Fall of France in 1940. And whereas in 1940 the decision that split France was imposed on her by *force majeure*, since 1954 the convulsion crippling the country is a crisis of French society itself.

For however the arguments may run about the rights, wrongs, pros, cons, etc., in the Algerian turmoil, it cannot be denied that for reasons rooted in the history of the past century the French have an enormous stake in Algeria, and it is not merely a stake in the purely material sense of individual possessions, but in the sense of Algeria's representing an organic

extension of the French people itself. Even though the French are a minority in Algeria, they are an extremely substantial minority: almost fifteen per cent of the total, to say nothing about the radical dependence of Algeria's economy on France in all senses, including the fact that the basic structure of even the local Algerian economy is directed by Frenchmen, admittedly largely for the sake of themselves but inevitably involving the actual livelihoods, professions and destinies of the Moslem population as a whole. It is, indeed, precisely this profound involvement of many hundreds of thousands of perfectly ordinary Frenchmen in the intimate life of Algeria that is responsible for the enormous bitterness and confusion generated by this question even in milieux far outside the borders of Europe. It is just this difficulty in disentangling the "legitimate" claims of France in Algeria from the "legitimate" claims of the Moslem population that lies at the root of the soul-searching going on in liberal milieux everywhere. By liberal milieux I mean those milieux for whom *doubt* concerning the merits of the case is characteristic: the so-called Right wing in France is perfectly clear-headed about its aims, and for that matter so is the Left Wing, if by that it is still comprehensible to mean the Communists and their allies. It is the vast mass of those in between who find themselves tormented by a dilemma which history seems to have made inescapable: is it a *good thing* for France to be violently ejected from North Africa?

In America, of course, the situation is far more complicated, at least insofar as Americans can be said to have any emotional interest in the matter at all. Here the confusion extends far beyond the "liberals"; hidebound conservatives, for instance, loathe France precisely for her "pinkish" attitudes on other questions; the astigmatic hucksters in the oil business identify Algerian nationalism with the so-called Arab national movement elsewhere and so tend automatically to support the dissident Algerians against France, essentially for the same reasons they have for combating Israel; "leftish" Americans,

on the other hand, forget completely the domestic situation of Metropolitan France and consider France in this one instance as an old-fashioned colonial power bent on grinding the faces of the native poor. French propagandists, in their turn, naturally make propaganda, which is at once seen through as a form of axe-grinding and in this country, at least, falls foul of still another, very old and scarcely avowed, distaste for the French as not only a decadent but a defeated nation, whose claims to greatness have by now been made ridiculous by decades of political "corruption" at home and impotence abroad.

TO MY MIND this last almost inarticulate but deeply felt attitude is the most pervasive source of the generally anti-French attitude on the part of otherwise completely disparate elements in the United States. Indeed, I should think that despite all the rhetorical blather about America's ties with France, etc., French culture is by far the most indigestible, through being the most self-sufficient, of all the great national cultures. What makes the French seem to outsiders "arrogant" is just this plain fact that French culture has a sufficiently far-reaching, comprehensive, and brilliant past to serve as a perfectly adequate universe of thought. Add to this self-sufficiency the perhaps insoluble problems of the French state and its consequent ineffectualness abroad, and the disturbing, indeed explosive incoherence of the Algerian imbroglio becomes manifest.

There is, to be sure, one "objective" element that might seem to an outsider to be decisive in any assessment of the Algerian problem: to what extent are the Algerian Moslems *in fact* behind the anti-French movement, or movements? Yet here again, as soon as we formulate the question its naiveté leaps to the eye: it is just this question of fact that is the thorniest question of all, and consequently one which all interested parties either distort or suppress altogether. It is the most notable omission in the latest book on the subject to be published in this country,

Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's *Lieutenant in Algeria*.

M. Servan-Schreiber, a youthful French journalist, has been given a great deal of notoriety lately in his own country. By way of being a boy-wonder a few years ago, he founded his own "liberal" newspaper in 1953, at the age of twenty-nine, and so exasperated the government that an excuse was apparently found for accelerating his recall to active service. He was instantly assigned to Algeria, doubtless with the pious hope on the part of his political enemies that life on the front would chasten the intemperances of the young critic or, failing that, eliminate him altogether.

In the event, M. Servan-Schreiber, having survived for six months what he freely describes as the folly, futility, degradation, stupidity, etc., etc., of the leadership both in the army and the government, has now taken his revenge by writing an unequivocal denunciation of "official" French policy in Algeria, with a despairing note throughout at the inability of the few men of good will to do anything about the spreading canker of disaffection, hatred and brutality on both sides.

A word about the American edition of the book. Without having seen the French original I have no idea of whom to blame, but the American text has evidently been aimed at a broad stratum of readers accustomed to American war-time reportage at its worst: the translator, doubtless abetted by the editor, has seen fit to make everyone talk in the profoundly bogus jargon created for American soldiers during the last war by the simple needs of a very broad, semi-educated public. Words like *gook*, *guy*, *phony*, *chicken*, *bellyful of lead*, *sob-sisters*, *buddies*, etc., interlard a prose which has in addition the sort of synthetic quality associated with ghost-writing at its most vulgar. Since Servan-Schreiber himself has a perfectly competent journalistic style, one can only suspect skullduggery at Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Moreover, the actual form of the book is modeled on the "personal," "anecdotal," "local-color" war-reporting that afflicted us ten years ago and more. Out of this

hodge-podge, to be sure, an echo of something French can be detected; but the necessity of making it "palatable" to the American public has evidently distorted the editor's perspective beyond all reason.

RETURNING to its ideological content, however, though the book is based on Servan-Schreiber's personal experiences, it is essentially a polemic, and the thesis underlying it is on the one hand too simple to be of any long-range political interest, and on the other too abstract in terms of the personal experiences it is supposed to infuse with relevance. Broadly put, Servan-Schreiber's view is clear; people should be nicer all around, they should champion the right, the French must somehow get closer to the Moslems, and a just and amicable solution will be found; because, however, of the passions now aroused on both sides, reinforced by the stupidity of the French political leadership, this solution is now doubtless out of reach.

There, is, of course, something in this. But for American readers, at any rate, it must seem to be an echo of a battle of ideas elsewhere. It is unenlightening with respect to the real correlation of forces in Algeria, partly because Servan-Schreiber's experiences there, while presumably instructive with respect to the shortcomings of the army and the government, taught him nothing about Algeria as such, so that he is extremely vulnerable to what is in fact propaganda emanating from the disaffected Algerians, and partly because he is not really interested in it. What really interests him is the moral and political question, but here the confusion baffles disentanglement: for if the Algerians have a right to independence (to take at their face value the claims of the extremist nationalist group) what should the French be doing there *at all*? Even though the Algerians are a non-viable political community, if French evacuation of the area were conceivable then it is just as conceivable that somehow or other the Algerians, plus perhaps the Moroccans, Tunisians, etc., would develop a regime of their own. But why should the French bother? That is, though Servan-Schreiber sympathizes with Al-

gerian disaffection, he lacks the boldness to sympathize enough; there is really no justification for him to back the French presence in North Africa at all, except from the point of view of the one segment of the Algerian insurgents who, he admits, apparently wish the French to stay on somehow, that is, who want political autonomy under the umbrella of the French economy and culture. But Servan-Schreiber himself seems to think that it is the nationalist extremists (whom for some reason he prefers calling "Stalinists") who are reaping the harvest of the bloodshed and gradually winning over the Moslem population.

In any case the cardinal issues are these: first, to what extent is the Algerian population disaffected (a question Servan-Schreiber does nothing to elucidate directly), and secondly, of what importance is this to the rest of the world?

The evidence offered by Servan-Schreiber on the first point is skimpy in the extreme, as well as contradictory. Obsessed as he is—doubtless rightly—with the failings of the French administration, and ignorant of Algeria otherwise, he pays almost no attention to this issue, although obviously it is a vital one from any point of view. The evidence that seeps through the skein of his personal digressions indicates if anything that the Algerian masses are not involved spiritually in this dissident movement. While Servan-Schreiber ignores the incontestable fact that the Algerians themselves have been the chief victims of the nationalist anti-French campaign—i.e., punished for not being anti-French—in the ratio of something like nine to one, he inadvertently indicates, as part of his general indictment of French policy, that the extremist wing takes advantage of French stupidity to justify its reprisals against its own people, which obviously boils down to the same thing. Since he is not interested in the actual facts of these national allegiances, he uses such evidence only in support of his analysis of the process, which from his point of view is that French folly is pushing the natives into the arms of the extremists. But this remains at best only an indication of

trend: after reading his book we have no notion of the degree of the extremists' success, of whether the process is reversible in principle or not, or in general, quite simply, of the real state of affairs. In my opinion the evidence, now that the Algerian conflict has been going on for some three years and more, is that the extremist wing has failed to enlist the essentially non-political Moslem natives under its banner, despite all the admitted failures and follies of the French administration.

THIS is evidently of cardinal importance even from the point of view of American liberals, who in a passion of benevolent muddleheadedness take it for granted more or less automatically that insurgents against a big power have the allegiance of their compatriots as it were by nature, and that all their claims are justified by virtue of that alone. Since it is obviously in the interest of the big power to claim that the insurgents represent no one but themselves, or "foreign agents" of one kind or another, liberals everywhere react quite mechanically in the opposite direction.

But after all, as indicated above, there is a question of fact here: if the insurgents do *not* represent the broad masses of the population that in itself introduces a radically different factor into the political equation.

The structure of Servan-Schreiber's book evades this point altogether, by harping on the defects of his own "side." For others, however, it must remain of major significance, and its absence deprives the book of value for foreigners, however much excitement it may have aroused in France, where after all the problem is of pressing topicality.

The other question—the importance of the Algerian conflict for the world at large—is evidently on a different scale, and a decision can be reached only on the basis of general considerations.

Does colonialism still have the same meaning it had in the last generation? Has the "emancipation" of former colonial states proven a benefit to their own people? Are Egyptians, or Iraqis, or Syrians, or

Yemenis, happier under the rule of their own "representatives" than Africans would be under the rule of a European power?

In the case of Algeria specifically, can anyone really think that the spoiled, extravagant, fanatical, ferocious, and empty-headed sons of middle-class families now at the head of the so-called movement of independence will be more beneficial for the masses of Algeria than a country like France, however debilitated and torn by dissension? Can it be forgotten that this anti-French movement has so little intellectual integrity or originality that it is a sitting target for Communist penetration, quite apart from the presence in it of actual Communists? Is it a good thing, in short, for Europe to leave North Africa to the devices of these self-deluded native leaders, whose incompetence and stupidity is bound to make them accessible to the Kremlin?

This is clearly the only way of encompassing this disturbing question from a non-French and non-Algerian perspective, and it is just this general formulation that Servan-Schreiber and other passionately

involved Frenchmen do nothing to elucidate. It should seem clear to any outsider that the elimination of French influence from North Africa, the Sahara and ultimately of Black Africa would mean a long step toward surrendering the native population to the caprice, corruption, and futility of its own leaders, and eventually towards the total abandonment of Africa by the West.

Thus the Algerian conflict is a matter of moment to everyone, not least the State of Israel, which has finally found in France the one ally whose organic interests, natural ability and intellectual self-consciousness can lay the foundations of a genuine concert of action in the pacification and fructification of the Mediterranean area.

Professors of Man Estranged

By HAROLD ROSENBERG

THE TOWER AND THE ABYSS, by ERICH KAH-
LER, George Braziller, Inc., 327 pp. \$6.00.

MAN AND PEOPLE, by JOSE ORTEGA Y GASSET.
W. W. Norton & Co., 272 pp. \$4.50.

THOUGH THERE exists in America a wide interest in that metaphysical state, or condition, known as "alienation," I doubt that it is going to become a required subject of study in our universities; yet I do know of one college where a course is being taught that comes close to being an introduction to the lore of the estranged one.

The difficulty is not the insufficiency of data to be surveyed. On the contrary, evidences of transformation and loss of identity appear in practically every field, from reports on brainwashing to statistics on the servant question. Any scholar who chooses to do so may revolutionize his specialty by reinterpreting it in terms of the slipped ego of contemporary man. In psychiatry, sociology, cultural anthropology, such revolutions have already become a commonplace. I should not be surprised, however, to learn that even in biology or

Prophetic Faith in Isaiah

By SHELTON BLANK

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ONE of America's top-ranking Old Testament scholars illuminates those verses of the book of Isaiah which contain the high-water insights of Biblical prophecy. He examines their background, meaning and contemporary significance. His analysis of the multiple authorship question and the "suffering servant" concept which, he contends, applied not to an individual but to Israel as a whole, reflect superb scholarship and a highly original mind. \$3.75

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chemistry the newer laws relate to the splitting and self-segregation of entities previously conceived as being elements of larger wholes; just as in moral and esthetic theory one keeps hearing that nuclear physics has established an errantry or "indeterminacy" in the atom that has something to do with the freedom of the individual to follow his own whim. With an alienated electron as the basis of the physical world, a system of concepts on estrangement could come as close as can be imagined to recapturing the seat once occupied by theology as Queen of the Sciences. The doctor of alienation could pass judgment on anything, whether in art criticism or multiple dwelling laws. Segregated unto itself, the study of the individual's segregation becomes the genre of profundity.

Perhaps its profundity is exactly what is keeping the topic out of American university catalogues. For the tradition of alienation-thinking itself decrees, as any adept will testify, that the United States, land of the pioneer and the immigrant, that is to say, of individuals alienated and cut off from the cultures and communities of their origin, is by this fatal circumstance the land *par excellence* of the superficial and the transitory; and to its inherent two-dimensionality, profundity is alien. A civilization so estranged by its nature and nativity from intangible guides, and vowed to the fragmentariness of mere "things," can have but a poor appreciation of such a negative reality as alienation and its aura of loss. It cannot comprehend absence *per se*, only deficiencies in what is there.

Hence, in America, philosophers of the void are compelled to disguise themselves as literary critics, sociologists, mental therapists. One examines the text of a novel and discovers it to be a lid on the abyss; abyss or no abyss, however, Literature is still there and the profession of literary critic. Or one charts the routines of a suburb and encounters *tohu-bohu* between the cars parked at the shopping center: this is good for a notice in *Time* and appointment to a full professorship. Dazed with their own non-being, and with

the non-being of art, American painters and poets chatter about the role of the artist and the techniques of "making" a painting or a poem; while case-workers and ministers advertise the presence of vacancy by promoting personality-development and "togetherness." Jimmy Durante used to point out that the Grand Canyon is a hole and that a hole is "nuttin." American high culture reverses this reductive logic and to study *nuttin'* takes a course in geography.

Now, however, that Outer Space has swept down on Capitol Hill, our prudishness concerning the vacuum may at last be overcome. In that case, The Inner Emptiness, too, may receive official recognition. Should this occur, what might be considered a textbook on alienation lies ready at hand. I refer to Erich Kahler's *The Tower and the Abyss, An Inquiry into the Transformation of the Individual*. A German, Professor Kahler serves alienation straight, without American double-talk, French novelizing or Kierkegaardian "indirection." If he has resorted to imagery for the title of his book, this is not, I am convinced, an effect of literary flightiness but in obedience to the tradition in alienation-thinking that holds that concepts cannot attain to the fullest depths of meaning without being supplemented by figures of speech.

PROFESSOR Kahler's alienation thesis is as orthodox as his title. Twentieth-century Man having gained inordinate power over nature, stands isolated on the turret of a Babel around which has risen the swirling night of a chaos presided over by the powers of scientification, specialization, standardization, functionalization and anonymization. What brought him to this pass was the supplanting of the Community (union derived from common origin), by the Collective (organization for common ends). Social mechanization goes hand in hand with personal disintegration. Professor Kahler indicates the operation of both processes in modern politics and public life, in poetry and the novel, in philosophy and sentiment. Two chapters, "The Split From Without, I and II," cover

alienation from the world; two more, "The Split From Within, I and II," document alienation from oneself. "Man Without Values" completes the picture. To conclude, Kahler offers the solution of a new Community, which shall transcend the individual while conferring organic unity upon him.

Familiarity with this line of thought, as developed through Professor Kahler's clear-cut dualities—values versus standards, sin versus crime, the total state versus the terror state—and his informed references to almost anything, should suffice to initiate the student into the mental bearing and vocabulary of the modern intellectual. In his three hundred pages the author of *The Tower* has sent out threads in every direction, between Werther's *Welt-schmerz* and the indifference of Camus' "stranger," between the decline of The Holy Roman Empire and Nazi sadism, between Freud and abstract painting. No specialist would establish such a mesh; yet if a contemporary conscience exists, it must consist precisely in the apprehension of relations like these.

Educationally speaking, the outstanding feature of Professor Kahler's book is the catholicity of its illustrations: Whitman for simultaneity, Hopkins for planned dissonance, Baudelaire and Cézanne for relentless objectivity, Pound, Eliot, Joyce for discontinuity, Picasso for dismemberment, Von Hofmannsthal, Rilke, Camus, Sartre for otherness, Existentialism for the absurd—together with a variety of satellite examples. In one lump the reader of *The Tower and the Abyss* may gain the essence of dozens of critical and speculative works of the past two or three decades. If he happens to have read these, he may make a game of guessing which poem by Baudelaire, which aspect of juvenile delinquency, which testimonial to Nazi psychosis, which formula of the Existentialists, Kahler is going to cite.

Although he favors a renewal of individual and social life in a coherence comparable to that once achieved through religion and tradition, Professor Kahler refuses to turn the clock back on science and freedom. Unlike most alienation phil-

osophers he adheres neither to rightist ecclesiastical and authoritarian "order" nor to Communist or Fascist "social discipline." He is a humanitarian with a respect for contemporary forms of knowledge and intelligence.

I AM AFRAID that being neither reactionary nor futurist only compels Kahler to contradict himself; as when, having admired the revelations of the new esthetic sensibility, he finishes by warning that "they [the arts] are about to destroy the human personality." Projecting this self-contradiction into an "ambivalence" of modern art does not help matters.

I shall not object, however, to the fact that the solution to alienation proposed by Kahler is one which he himself recognizes to be fairly futile, that of a "communitarian" movement started here and there in Europe since the war with the aim of forming "oases of humanity in the midst of a collectivized world, islands of unanimity in a sea of raging hostility." That Professor Kahler avoids a mass-action outcome to his diagnosis of modern "chaos" is all to his credit and qualifies him to teach alienation without giving offense.

For it must be acknowledged that the subject is highly inflammable and dangerous. Consciousness of estrangement from self and from other men, and from God and nature too, is a consciousness bordering on the psychotic—which, while normal enough for artists and original thinkers, implies trouble when it becomes the basis of a definition of existing social relations, as may be seen in the parallel instance of a world defined from the point of view of Jewish alienhood. Conversely, a social interpretation of estrangement is inseparable from nostalgia and has led to resurrectionist rabble-rousing. *Every violent political concept of the past one hundred years—pan movements, national revivalist, Bolshevism, Fascism—has arisen as an antidote to alienation.* This does not mean that antidotes may not be justified, but one ought to be aware of the logic of extremism inherent in this mode of thought.

For my own part, I regard communal "wholeness," even the peaceful and vol-

untary unanimity advocated by Professor Kahler, as an unattractive and bad idea. A genuinely human society would be not a supra-individual entity to which all individuals conformed but one in which, as the young Marx put it, nothing could exist independently of individuals. Moreover, it is an error, albeit a very common one (e. g., T. S. Eliot), to contrast contemporary alienation with a presumed earlier wholeness within historical civilization. Every other society—medieval European, Greek, Egyptian—had its form of alienation, and it is against the images of their demons and alter egos, rather than against the imaginary whole man of an "original community," that our otherness ought to be measured. Begin with the myth of an earlier "cultural synthesis" and the present always appears as an infirmary of split men, and there is no place to go but Utopia.

IN CONTRAST to Kahler, Ortega sees estrangement as an aspect of the human condition rather than as a malady peculiar to our times. That is to say, alienation—*alteración* is the Spaniard's contribution to the lexicon of self-loss—is for him a subject of philosophy not of desperate outcries, specifically of epistemological analysis in the line of Descartes, Hegel, Husserl and the Existentialists. In these lectures, delivered, one gathers, before rather large audiences, Ortega feels fine. He is speaking not of Modern Man, the victim-criminal, but of Man, and to the perils and minus signs of the latter, jokes have never been inappropriate.

Man is alienated because each man in his thought and in his behavior is, now as in the past, subject to "people," to a consensus that acts upon him through usage and, public opinion ("they say"), but which itself lacks a living subject, or "I," and is hence inhuman. "People" signifies a sum of abstract individuals, that is, individuals emptied of the unique and unmistakable identity of a person; "people" is anybody. All communities are made up of such alter egos—Kahler's distinction between "community" and "collective" could have at best only a reverse application

with the author of *The Revolt of the Masses*. If the member of a primitive village is less "fragmentized" than the citizen of the modern metropolis, his wholeness is hardly an advantage, since his self has been, so to speak, unanitized out of existence by the total impress and surveillance of the communal non-person.

No one can escape *alteración*, for no one lives in the solitary universe which is "the radical reality" of the pristine self. Even the hermit is infiltrated with the social through the very language in which he meditates. Language is but residue of the dead actions of others which continue to exert force upon the living. "Man is constitutively, by his inexorable destiny, as a member of society, *the etymological animal*—i.e., loaded with actions whose meanings have worn away and need to be recovered by analysis." While Kahler conceives our being taken out of ourselves by innovations such as newspaper reading and technology, Ortega establishes the phenomenon across the ages through philology and the analysis of a handshake.

Society is the enemy of the individual self, whether quietly, through constituting a universe that displaces the reality given in personal perception and feeling, or by open threat, or actual exercise, of force through the State. "In solitude, man is his truth; in society he tends to be his mere conventionality or falsification." If Ortega does not, like earlier romantics, advocate self-exile to the hills or ponds, it is because he knows that the social cannot be evaded that easily. Not physical flight but psychic struggle is his password; struggle not to form a new community but for the refreshment of "being inside oneself" where, away from all communities and all others, true ideas and actions are born.

Thus, entering into the labyrinth of otherness, Kahler and Ortega emerge at opposite ends: Kahler in the reconstituted community of Socialist and Utopian theory, Ortega in the recovered "I" of Romanticism.

But whether one wishes to renew the self or to change the world, the lecture hall has its own interests. There, Kahler's communitarianism becomes a device for rounding

out a course; while Ortega's withdrawal for the creative leap becomes a call for a revolution in sociology and phonetics. The teaching of both has more to do with changing opinions about situations than with changing the situations themselves. But didn't they set out to demonstrate that man is lost to himself and that this is matter of life or death? Perhaps America is right after all and alienation is not a subject.

Profile of an American Radical

By SHLOMO KATZ

THE MEMOIRS OF A REVOLUTIONIST, by DWIGHT MACDONALD. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 376 pp. \$4.75.

DURING one of my infrequent furloughs in the course of my service in the army in World War II, I met an acquaintance who was rejected by the army for physical reasons but also happened to be an ardent pacifist. He was so devoted to his cause, in fact, that he published a small mimeographed paper condemning the war, criticizing the government, and calling upon young men to evade the draft. This little paper had a minute audience. But he distributed it through the mails, and when I saw him, he complained bitterly against the Post Office; not, God forbid, because it interfered with his leaflet (it was scarcely more than that) but precisely because the Post Office took no notice either of it or of him. He was amazed, and his vanity was deeply hurt that both limelight and punishment were denied him.

It is irrelevant at this point to attempt to analyze what was at the root of this man's trouble, why he so passionately sought punishment for a guilt of whose true nature he was obviously unaware. What does lend importance to this little incident is that it was so characteristic of the role of the radical in American society. The radical is not taken seriously. Whether he intones against wrongs in solemn cadences or merely sticks out his tongue at the foibles of society, he fails to make an impression. His attacks

cause no damage, his insults hurt no one's feelings (outside the radical circles, naturally), his high moral principles do not convince, his sharpest irony fails to make a dent.

It is, of course, possible that the reason the American radical so completely fails to make an impression on his environment is that he does not take *himself* seriously; that, whether he admits it or not, his radicalism is seldom more than a temporary escapade, an immature rebelliousness which pretends to assault the gates of heaven but is really no more than a childish prank which, because of its nature, permits all kinds of extremism, a kind of youthful "affair" in which the radical is involved but to which he is not deeply committed.

The foregoing reflections come to mind upon reading Dwight Macdonald's *The Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. The title itself is a giveaway. For Dwight Macdonald was not really a revolutionist and his "revolutionary" career consisted of a couple of years with the Trotskyites and later a few years as editor of the very interesting magazine, *Politics*, in which, already disillusioned with politics and its possibilities, he probed the moral aspect of the world, reached quick and all-embracing conclusions about many weighty issues and, at the end, "feeling stale, tired, disheartened, and—if you like—demoralized . . ." returned to popular journalism on the staff of the *New Yorker*, where he writes brilliant and often ironical reportage on the social and political scene.

Macdonald's book is a collection of many of his essays, most of which appeared in *Politics*. By now they are nearly all dated (in fact Mr. Macdonald, during

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the years, found it necessary to add numerous footnotes exclaiming how wrong he had been a few years back). But it is not Mr. Macdonald's errors that are of particular interest nor need we quarrel with his self-definition as a revolutionist. If he was not a revolutionist, neither were the others who laid claim to this title. In this sense, Dwight Macdonald is a representative American radical or ex-radical.

THE MOST important essays in this book deal with the war years. And it is interesting to watch the radical mentality in the face of this global cataclysm. The barbs of his irony were directed indiscriminately against matters big and small, probably on the radical and true assumption that a drop of the ocean has all the properties of the ocean itself. Thus the pearl-handled pistols of General Patton and his barroom language and manners became the target of delicious sarcasm, and Mr. Macdonald's hair rose with horror when he read an army manual describing the truly savage techniques of infighting. And of course he was horrified by the death camps of the Nazis, and almost as much by the Allied bombings of German cities during the war, and by the lamentable camps in this country where Japanese Americans from the West Coast were interned. Some fine reasoning went into his discussion of these matters. This reasoning was characteristic of the American radical who on the political level knew very well that the revolution he was preaching (whatever it happened to be) was not likely to happen, that he was not likely to be called on to implement any of his slogans, and was therefore free to be self-indulgent with words and to look at things through the wrong end of a telescope; and on the literary level he had been trained that a rose is a rose is a rose, and consequently a concentration camp is a concentration camp is a . . . irrespective of whether it was in Nazi Germany from which many returned cold and dead in sealed boxes, or in Colorado from which all returned alive; and a bombing, of course, is a bombing is a bombing, and consequently *ours* are no better than *theirs*, almost no better, that is. But why quibble

about small matters when the radical is out to be *radical*? Hence, Mr. Macdonald could with ease and good conscience and seeming self-approbation construct a syllogism which runs somewhat as follows (I am using some of his chapter headings): "The German War Crimes Are Unique"; "German Anti-Semitism Is Not a 'People's Action'"; "If Everyone Is Guilty, No One Is Guilty"; "We, Too, Are Guilty."

Here is a case where a group of titles tells a story to an extent that it is almost unnecessary to read what came under the titles. And, indeed, in these chapters Mr. Macdonald enunciated some noble ideas; their relation to reality, of course, is a different matter. Were these high sounding ideas, which tend to equate wrongs because all wrong is wrong, to have been followed up, Dwight Macdonald (and many another radical) would have become one of the major saints of the twentieth century. But this is precisely the weakness of the American radical, that he neither seeks to relate his ideas to reality, since in that case he would have to temper his nobility, nor does he adapt the circumstances of his personal life to them, perhaps because that would imply a commitment to a mode of behavior which is difficult, burdensome, painful, and deprives one of the compensations of bravado and indulgence in high-sounding ideas and principles.

AS A RESULT, the American radical has become a figure of comic futility, neither taken, nor taking himself seriously. If he was of the naive variety, he clung to his principles with mechanical consistency without probing their deeper meaning. (This gave rise to the manifestation, to cite but one instance, of radical pacifists in this country sharing the same public platform with America-Firsters or with totalitarian Stalinists.) Where the naiveté was lacking, the plunge into radicalism tended to degenerate into a jaunt down the highway of ideas and principles, with stops at one neon-lit ideological hamburger stand after another. This may explain the number and variety of altars at which so many American radicals worshipped before they attained middle age.

We may assume that this was not a conscious process, and that the radical sincerely believed at the moment the particular cause he espoused. But in perspective one gains an impression of the American radical as bright, flighty, self-indulgent, very, very young (in the best instances, touchingly naive) and not really serious. Were it not so, we would find some of our former radicals as suicides, as saints who renounced this hopelessly sinful world, as true revolutionists, or, at least, as people who in despair retired to their private sanctums. Instead we tend to find them by and large as somewhat chastened sophisticates who, no longer carrying a banner, proceed knowingly to report the world to us, meanwhile winking meaningfully: "You know they're all crooks!"

Which is the more palatable character—the American radical in his youth, or after he gets to write his memoirs as a "revolutionist"? It is hard to tell. The image of the young American radical at least reminds us of the famous statement by Don Quixote: "... it is not the duty of knights errant to examine whether the afflicted, enslaved and oppressed whom they meet by the way are in evil plight and anguish because of crimes or misfortunes. Their concern is simply to relieve them because they are needy and in distress, looking at their sorrow and not at their rogueries. . . . If anyone sees aught amiss in what I have done, I say that he knows little of the principles of chivalry and, furthermore, he lies like a misbegotten son of a whore and this I will make him know with my sword . . ."

But Don Quixote never wrote his memoirs as a knight errant and could not have done so. American "revolutionists," on the other hand, almost invariably give us a blow-by-blow account of their troubles with Sancho Panza and of the windmills they tilted at, meanwhile nodding sagely: "Boys will be boys, you know."

And perhaps this is the basic weakness of American radicals—that instead of profound and lasting commitment to a cause, the years of their radicalism are merely an unconscious gathering of material for a book.

Wingless Wandervogel, 1957

By PAUL GOODMAN

ON THE ROAD, by JACK KEROUAC. The Viking Press, 310 pp. \$3.95.

IN three hundred pages these fellows cross America eight times, usually camping on friends or relatives; and they have kicks. The narrator tends to become saddened by it all, but gives little evidence of understanding why. The fellows seem to be in their middle or late 'twenties ("not long after my wife and I split up")—surprisingly, for the kicks are the same as we used to have less solemnly in our teens, between terms. Mostly they are from the middle class. Many other young men in their 'twenties and 'thirties call this book crazy and the greatest, as if it were their history: they were there. So let's look into it.

To an uncritical reading, *On The Road* seems worse written than it is. There are hundreds of incidents but, throughout most of the book, nothing is told, nothing is presented, everything is just "written about." Worse, the narrator seems to try to pep it up by sentences like, "That night all hell broke loose," when the incident is some drinking sailors refusing to obey an order; "this was the greatest ride I ever had," but nothing occurs beyond a fellow getting his pants wet trying to urinate from a moving truck; "this was exciting, this was the greatest"—but it's not exciting. Soon, when the narrator or some other character says "The greatest," we expect that he means "pretty fair"; but alas, he does not mean even this, but simply that there was *some* little object of experience, of whatever value, instead of the blank of experience in which these poor kids generally live.

For when you ask yourself what is expressed by this prose, by this buoyant writing about racing-across-the-continent, you find that it is the woeful emptiness of running away from even loneliness and vague discontent. The words "exciting," "crazy," "the greatest," do not refer to any object

or feeling, but are a means by which the members of the "beat generation" convince one another that they have been there at all. "I dig it" doesn't mean "I understand it," but, "I perceive that something exists out there." On me as a reader, the effect is dismay and, since I know some of these boys (I say "boys"; Jack Kerouac is thirty-five), I almost burst into tears.

Last summer I listened to Kerouac's friend Allen Ginsberg read a passage from his *Howl*; it was a list of imprecations that he began pianissimo and ended with a thunderous fortissimo. The fellows were excited, it was "the greatest." But I sadly asked Allen just where in either the ideas, the imagery, or the rhythm was the probability for the crescendo; what made it a sequence at all and a sequence to be read just like that. The poet was crestfallen and furious; this thought had never occurred to him. And yet, during those few minutes they *had* shared the simple-minded excitement of speaking in a low voice and gradually increasing to a roar; it was not much of a poetic experience, but it was something, it was better than feeling nothing at all that night. What Kerouac does well, not just writes about, is his description of the jazz-musician who has hit on "it" and everybody goes wild shouting, "Go! Man! Go!" But they cannot say what "it" is. These boys are touchingly inarticulate, because they don't know anything; but they talk so much and so loud, because they feel insulted by the existence of the grown-ups who know a little bit.

"You can't *howl* a gripe, Allen. You can howl in pain or in rage, but what you are doing is griping." Perhaps the pain is too sore to utter a sound at all; and certainly their justifiable rage is far too dangerous for them to feel at all. The entire action of *On The Road* is the avoidance of interpersonal conflict.

One is stunned at how conventional and law-fearing these lonely middle-class fellows are. They dutifully get legal marriages and divorces. The hint of a "gang-bang" makes them impotent. They never masturbate or perform homosexual acts. They do not dodge the draft. They are

hygienic about drugs and diet. They do not resent being underpaid, nor speak up at all. To disobey a cop is "all hell." Their idea of crime is the petty shoplifting of ten-year-olds stealing cigarettes or of 'teen agers joyriding in other people's cars. But how could it be otherwise? It is necessary to have some contact with institutions and people in order to rebel against them. It is necessary to want something in order to be frustrated and angry. They have the theory that to be affectless, not to care, is the ultimate rebellion, but this is a fantasy; for right under the surface, obvious to a trained eye, is burning shame, hurt feelings, fear of impotence, speechless and powerless tantrum, cowering before papa, being rebuffed by mama; and it is these anxieties that dictate their behavior in every crisis. Their behavior is a conformity *plus royaliste que le roi*.

One kid (age twenty-one) visited my home the other night, carrying his copy of *On The Road*. The salient feature was his expressionless mask-face, with the squared jaw of unconscious, suspicious watchfulness, the eyes in a fixed stare of unfelt hostility, plus occasional grinding of his back teeth at a vague projected threat. Even the hostility was hard to make overt, but his lips cracked in a small childish smile when he was paid attention to. "But nothing *can* be interesting from coast to coast, boy, if you do not respond to it with some interest. Instead all you can possibly get is to activate your rigid body in various towns, what you call kicks." He explained that one had to avoid committing oneself to any activity, lest one make a wrong choice.

IT is useful to place this inexpressive face and his unoffending kicks in our recent literary genealogy. Great-granddaddy, I guess, is the stoical hero of Hemingway: Hemingway's young fellow understands that the grown-up world is corrupt and shattering, but he is not "beat," for he can prove that he is himself a man by being taciturn, growing hair on his chest, and shooting elephants. He has "values" and therefore can live through a few books. His heir is Celine's anti-hero, a much

shrewder fellow: he sees that to have those "values" is already to be duped by the corrupt adults, so he adopts the much more powerful role of universal griper and crybaby, to make everybody feel guilty and disgusted. The bother with his long gripe is that it is monotonous, there is a lot of opportunity for writing, but not even a single book. The next hero, and I think the immediate predecessor of being on the road, gives up the pretense of being grown-up altogether (a good case is Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*): he is the boy in the very act of being mortally wounded by the grown-ups' corruption. This terrible moment is one book. But you can't cry forever, so you set your face in a mask and go on the road. The adolescent decides that he himself is the guilty one—this is less painful than the memory of being hurt—so he'd better get going. The trouble is that there is no longer any drama in this; the drama occurred before "*my wife and I split up*," before I lost my father.

Sociologically, the following propositions seem to me to be relevant: (1) In our economy of abundance there are also surplus people, and the fellows on the road are among them. There is in fact no man's work for them to do. (2) We are inheriting our failure, as an advanced industrial country, to have made reasonable social arrangements in the last century; now when there is no longer a motive to work hard and accumulate capital, we have not developed an alternative style of life. (3) The style that we do have, "Madison Avenue," is too phony for a young person to grow up into. (4) Alternatively, there is an attraction to the vitality (by comparison) of the disfranchised Negroes and now the Puerto Ricans; these provide a language and music, but this culture is primitive and it corrupts itself to Madison Avenue as soon as it can. (5) In family life there has been a similar missed-revolution and confusion, so that many young people have grown up in cold, hypocritical, or broken homes. Lacking a primary environment for the expression and training of their feelings, they are both affectless and naive in the secondary environment. (6) The spontaneous "wild" invention that

we may expect from every young generation has been seriously blighted by the anxieties of the war and the cold war. (7) The style of life resulting from all this is an obsessional conformity, busy-ness without any urge toward the goals of activity, whether ideal goals or wealth and power. There is not much difference between the fellows "on the road" and the "organization men"—the former readily become the latter.

* * *

"I ate another apple pie and ice cream; that's practically all I ate all the way across the country, I knew it was nutritious and it was delicious of course." (page 15)

On other occasions, they eat franks and beans. More rarely hamburgers, malted milks, of course. That is, the drink-down quick-sugar foods of spoiled children, and the pre-cut meat for lazy chewing beloved of ages six to ten. Nothing is bitten or bitten-off, very little is chewed; there is a lot of sugar for animal energy, but not much solid food to grow on. I suppose that this is the most significant observation one can make about *On The Road*.

For nearly two-thirds of this book one is struck, I have said, by the lack of writing; the book is nothing but a conversation between the buddies, "Do you remember when?" and "Do you remember how we?" "That was the greatest!" Here is confirmation that they, like Kilroy, were there; but not much distilled experience for the reader. But then (page 173) there is a page of writing, not very good and not original—it is from the vein of rhapsody of Celine and Henry Miller—nevertheless, writing. The situation is that the narrator finally finds himself betrayed, abandoned, penniless, and hungry in a strange city. The theme of the rhapsody is metempsychosis, "I realized that I had died and been reborn numberless times but just didn't remember"—and this theme is a happy invention, for it momentarily raises the road to a plane of metaphysical fantasy. And this is how the passage climaxes:

"In the window I smelled all the food of San Francisco. . . . Let me smell the drawn butter and lobster claws. There were places where they specialized in thick red roast

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beef *au jus* or roast chicken basted in wine. There were places where hamburgs sizzled on grills and the coffee was only a nickel. And oh, that pan-fried chow mein, etc."

Here, at least in wish, is a piece of reality that is not just kicks and "the greatest"; he wants to *eat* this food. Silone was right when he said that we must learn again the words for Bread and Wine.

Book Reviewers and Contributors to this Issue

JOEL CARMICHAEL has written for *Foreign Affairs* and *Commentary*. He is co-translator of Prof. Carl Brockelmann's *History of the Islamic Peoples*.

PAUL GOODMAN was last represented in *Midstream* by a critical study of *Compulsion*, "The Crime of Our Century."

HAROLD ROSENBERG is widely known as a critic of the cultural and social scene.

HANS MEYERHOFF is currently on the staff of the Department of Humanities of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has written extensively for various periodicals.

MARION MAGID has studied theatre abroad on a Fulbright Grant.

HARRY ROSKOLENKO, whose poetry has ap-

peared in many literary periodicals over the years, is currently at work on a sequence of poems, of which "Areas of Conscience" is a part.

JON SILKIN is a young British poet whose work has appeared in many magazines. He was last represented in the Summer, 1956 issue of *Midstream* by the poem, "Furnished Lives."

HARVEY SHAPIRO is a young poet now living in New York. This is his first appearance in *Midstream*.

SAMUEL MENASHE last appeared in this magazine in the Summer, 1957 issue with two poems, "David" and "Judgment Day."

DAVID GALLER was last represented in the Winter, 1957 issue of *Midstream* by the poem, "Meditation at Rockaway Beach."

SPECIAL NOTICES

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 16th day of September, 1957

LEE JAY ROBBINS
Notary Public, State of New York
(My commission expires March 30, 1958)

(Seal)

from the four corners

(Continued from page 4)

and primarily by hatred for the Soviet regime. When the Bolsheviks returned to Kiev, Zaslavsky felt compelled to go into hiding for some weeks. His friends then feared, not without grounds, that if he were to be apprehended, his life would be in great danger. But finally, as a result of complicated and delicate negotiations, pressure was exerted in appropriate quarters to have Zaslavsky forgiven and to grant him his freedom on condition that he publicly recant his political past. Zaslavsky accepted this condition and some days later the press published his confession.

The confession was quite modest in tone and produced the impression of a sincere human document. In it, Zaslavsky did not jump on the popular bandwagon nor did he besmirch his former Menshevik friends. It was simply—he declared—that he had become convinced of his great error in appraising the *Zeitgeist*; that the objective tendency of history, as he now realized, was different from what he had imagined and from the way he had grasped it in accordance with his understanding of Marxism. It was foolish, he declared, to fight against insuperable forces, irrespective of whether one was willing to identify oneself with them or not. He drew a simple conclusion in his confession: "If I, who had thought myself so wise, could make such a fatal and unforgettable error in my evaluation of a tremendously important historical situation, it is proof that I should not meddle in politics at all; that I must bow to the decree of the inevitable and devote such modest strength as I have, to sedate and neutral cultural work—within the framework of the ruling regime."

But at that time there already existed no entirely neutral cultural work in the Soviet Union. A short time later, Zaslavsky accepted a modest post (this

time driven by need, to be sure) in the Soviet Telegraph Agency.

Naturally, we never questioned him about the nature of his work in the Telegraph Agency (which might have contained secrets), but we took it for granted that he worked there merely as a hired hand—to improve the style of the not-too-educated higher officials of that time, or to supply translations from German and French.

I recall his mien at that time—modest, restrained, bearing the melancholy stamp of a thinking, spiritually and morally suffering and disillusioned man. He seemed to have lost all his journalistic sarcasm, which gave way to the delicate irony of a restrained and refined observer. In his behavior one could no longer note even a trace of his one-time partisan sophomoric cocksureness. The meetings of the Religious-Philosophical Society did not convert him to religion. Nor did they influence him in the direction of a too earnest involvement with philosophical problems. He enjoyed those meetings simply because of the atmosphere that prevailed. There the air was freer and no one took offense if another tried to demonstrate the absolute opposite of what had been declared a moment before. But we did sense in Zaslavsky a striving to attain a kind of non-metaphysical, moral-esthetic humanism which should replace his one-time Marxist faith.

ONCE, on a late autumn afternoon, I took a long walk with him. We went from *Kreshchatik* to *Vladimirskaya Gorka* where we could see a long stretch of the Dnieper between its green banks. From a drama studio nearby some young girl students came out, and with their gay, self-assured voices and hearty laughter, they introduced an intriguing "aroma" into the air: the optimism of seventeen and the conviction of the genuineness of their talents. Zaslavsky and I, on the other hand, were considerably underfed and jaded. The soles of his shoes were, to be sure,

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still in fairly respectable condition; mine were in a state that it is a shame to describe. As if to make up for this, I wore a white ironed shirt with starched cuffs (it was a bit too blue because it was easier to obtain blueing than soap), whereas he had on an unpressed shirt of indefinable color, the kind that in my childhood days used to be called "oxford." The girls, though, whatever their talents might have been, all had the carefreeness and biological sureness of tomorrow which easily outweighed their monotonous and inadequate diet. The weather was still warm, and they wore home-made white skirts, probably improvised from remaining tablecloths and sheets. Zaslavsky looked mildly at the bevy of girls, sighed briefly and said: "It is their world; neither mine nor yours. Only when looking at them does one realize that both of us are two old and exhausted Jews. It is their world because they can adapt themselves to it and in a few years they will believe that no other kind of world can, or should, exist. They are children of the revolution, of a new world order. Moreover, if they will stick to art, to the theatre, they will be happy. Artists are non-political by nature. It is no great treachery if one wants to play Shakespeare and one must play, let us say, some proletarian drama which Demian Bedny may write tomorrow. Regimes come and regimes go, but art remains art."

A few minutes later he corrected himself: "No, it is not true. The regime has power also over poetry, literature and the theatre. Tomorrow it can decree that Shakespeare be played according to a new interpretation to which the actor cannot consent. Music, too, is not free. The composers, in any case, will be censored. The only one whom it is perhaps impossible to control ideologically, is the individual violinist or pianist. And this, too, is perhaps not true. One would have to understand better the technique of music in order to reach a conclusion. But what is the

difference? Those children there will adapt themselves and in time they will forget that they had once adapted themselves. But after the age of twenty-five or thirty, the personality is finally fixed. Try and re-form yourself if you can! Only dunces can do that!"

For some minutes we were silent and then I asked: "Are you so sure you will not return to politics?"

He waved his hand as if to say, "Why talk nonsense?"

"No—not in this incarnation. Too old. I am old in my youth; mainly I am worn out, and what's more, confused. This is not my time. Perhaps they are right, but I am organically incapable of accepting their rightness. In order to be just to myself, I may perhaps have to be unjust to them—unjust and helpless."

"But we are beyond help. The tide is against us. However, this is not so terrible. It is possible to live outside politics, to live better, more humanely, more decently, than in politics. Family life can be a much greater source of pure and calm joy than all of us had thought . . . children, one's own or someone else's . . . personal friends . . . a good book, a song, a walk in the park, a lonesome visit to a forest—these the regime will not take away from us, and if it does, it will be only for a while . . . these are the eternal human verities that can exist in any society, under any regime. . . . No, the way back to politics is barred to me. I have vowed and I will keep my vow."

ZASLAVSKY, as is well known, did not keep his vow. He became, first, a frequent contributor, and later a bit of a boss in Soviet journalism. For years I followed his work in *Pravda* from abroad. I am not especially eager to judge him. He owes me nothing and, moreover, there exist a considerable number of vows (some of them not trivial ones, either) which I, too, lacked the strength to observe.

But I notice that Zaslavsky, the one-time Social Democrat, feels quite at

home in the "stabilized tide" of the Bolshevik waters. In fact he feels so comfortable that he even protests the bitter fate of journalists in the sinful capitalist world.

"That which in some countries is described as freedom of the press," declares this highly placed political commentator of *Pravda*, "is no more than a rope with which the capitalist publishers bind their journalists. Whereas the Soviet journalist is *free* because no external opinions can influence him." The journalist in capitalist America, Zaslavsky further declares, serves his boss and journalism is merely a career for him. Whereas the Soviet journalist serves the people and his journalism is a social function.

This is not the time for polemics against Russia and the Soviet regime. [This article, as indicated above, was written in 1945, when the Soviet Union was an ally against Nazi Germany and the legend of Stalingrad captured the imaginations of many who otherwise totally rejected Communism and Stalinism. Ed.] Criticism of the Soviets is frequently, and sometimes intentionally, misinterpreted at this time and may easily be exploited by certain types of "critics" of the Soviet Union with whom one does not want to be linked. But when one reads Zaslavsky's boasting of his "freedom" and his "sympathy" for the slavish lot of journalists in other countries who are held on a leash by the capitalists, one cannot help but wonder: does he really mean what he says, or, a thousand pardons to Mr. Zaslavsky, is he merely putting up a front? Whom is Zaslavsky "kidding" when he says that journalism in the Soviet Union is not a career? Hasn't he made a first-rate career of it, and not only on the basis of his undeniable abilities? Writers more capable and talented than he have not made such a career or, having made it, have lost it in a day when they refused to go on, or could not continue in harness. Had Zaslavsky not gained favor in appropriate quarters, he would most

probably have ended up on the staff of the *Pravda* of some God-forsaken hole in a remote corner of Siberia, instead of on that of Moscow. Let Zaslavsky today try and write an article against the Soviet prohibition of enlisted men's visiting military clubs designated for officers. Or let him dare to condemn courageously the new regulation which re-introduces into the Soviet Army the Czarist custom of orderlies for officers. (Is he in favor of these regulations?) Zaslavsky knows very well what would happen to him in such cases. He also knows very well that in all of the Soviet Union there exists only *one* newspaper which, it is true, has thousands of local editions.

No, Soviet journalists are not "servants of the people" in the sense that socialists once understood this term. In order to be true and productive "servants of the people," to serve them out of love, a journalist must have alternatives to choose between. Morality is unthinkable in circumstances where the *yetzer ha'rah* [evil inclination] cannot function. Freedom means choice, decision, inner conflict, and the triumph of the spirit within that conflict. Where there exist no possibilities to "sin" there also exist no saints. Saints are those who can choose between the sacred and the profane and choose the former. Should the *yetzer ha'rah* be destroyed today and the *yetzer tov* [inclination to good] remain in full control, we would have not decent people, but decent automatons—but then, how can an automaton be decent? What signifies his decency? A journalist who has no choices cannot be honest and most certainly cannot be free.

This is tedious—as tedious as the alphabet or the multiplication table. It is our misfortune that we have become so "wise" that we have lost the sense for the simple, the elementary, the self-evident, the obvious. When, during my childhood, I first encountered the word "sophist," and did not know what it meant, I asked someone older than myself. He explained to me

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that a sophist is a person who can prove that "this table before you is really your grandfather." I still recall the terror which this definition aroused within me. Is Zaslavsky, too, such a sophist? I do not know, but the terror remains—it is terror in the face of perverseness.

Echo of an Echo

By MARION MAGID

ONE HAS been bored before by "ethnic" theatre—after the first intricacies of the Balinese dancers have begun to pall, or following an ill-advised foray to a movie in Chinatown, but *Tevya and His Daughters* strikes, after all, closer to home, and so one leaves the theatre finally, not only embarrassed, but angry. One has an impulse to see the manager and demand one's innocence back, for the witnessing of certain kinds of failure not only is not edifying, it is destructive.

The production at the Carnegie Hall Playhouse* craves the indulgence of the spectators. Making no demands whatever, it ultimately enlists their participation on illicit grounds—sentiment, nostalgia, confusion, past pain, everything but art. So conscious were the producers of how well that sort of thing is likely to go in New York (the unlooked-for and surely unprecedented success of *The World of Sholom Aleichem* of a few seasons back will undoubtedly be having repercussions for quite some time) that they have not even bothered to make a play out of it, but have simply strung together several incidents, abetted by what is now standard musical evocation of the lost world of East European Jewry—a series of player piano whimsies, which achieve their not inconsiderable effect (primarily bucolic—a frolic on the Kasrilivka

greensward) through a kind of syrupy insistence. The blurring of the sound, its failure to strike the note at dead center, indicates the failure of the production in the visual and other areas as well, to achieve a precise image of any world at all, for longer than a moment.

Perhaps nowhere more than in the theatrical art, and particularly in dealing with elements exotic to the tradition, is this precision demanded; yet apparently no one involved in the production of *Tevya*, either in an acting or directing capacity, could bring to the service of the play an over-mastering image of what its world was all about—beyond a generalized sense of the material under scrutiny as "warm," "folksy," "quaint," that is to say bearing no resemblance to reality as lived or conceived, in the past or the present. The result is a production which never gets beyond the tentative, which is always approximate, and almost always misses fire. The actors turn in disparate performances which range from the uncertain stylization of the *Tevya* role (an approach to the grotesque is indicated, but never realized) to the tense, understated attitudes of the daughters, spotted heretofore largely in the milieu of Tennessee Williams.

The failure in conception of the role of *Tevya* is symptomatic of the failure of the production as a whole. Strenuously avoiding the specific—for to work in terms of a fixed point of reference would mean taking a position, thereby losing out on a vast reserve of responses, available and ready to be drawn on in the audience, the lump in the throat and the rising chuckle—the role attempts to encompass all possibilities by allowing for them within a deliberately vague outline. A series of random shrugs and neo-Chagallian postures are intended to designate the imminence of Chassidic ecstasy which is so much a feature of the packaged-for-export old-world Yiddish ethos; in his speech *Tevya* echoes what has come

* *Tevya and His Daughters* opened at the Carnegie Hall Playhouse September 16, 1957.

to be the conventional indication of Yiddish rendered into English on the American stage. It is achieved primarily not by the deformation of individual words, but rather by a thickened articulation; the inflection is not so much Yiddish as organizational. It evokes fund-raising, trade-union meetings, after-banquet speeches. Basically, it signifies a "tactful" avoidance of any specific national or regional accent, and is intended to convey instantly authentic folk-wisdom, honesty, candor, and a marginal position in society. (As a convention this method of speech has found its way into the most unexpected places, including most "worthwhile" television drama with an urban New York setting.)

IN HIS CHARACTERIZATION Tevya hovers, as does the play, perpetually between two modes: that of the masque, the stylized rendering of specific moods, emotions, exigencies, through a code of gesture—a kind of dance; and the realistic, an attempt to convey an actual man at a particular time, with a particular face and body and a particularized set of reactions. For the first possibility, Mike Kellin's performance is not intricate or inventive or artful enough; he tends to break the mold of his own pose by appealing to the audience; he is self-conscious, like a man caught performing a ritual whose function he no longer remembers. The failure of the second possibility results from a more significant kind of evasion—a refusal to confront the real meaning of what has created him: the brutality which has made him too mild, the humiliation which is the source of his understanding, the gentleness which he seems to have bought partially at the expense of his manhood. Tevya's ironies are too facile, and the gesture designating them has the meaninglessness of an inherited tic. His shrug is an imitation of an imitation, and his sigh, the echo of an echo, transmitted at third remove via the now-defunct Second Avenue Theatre. By the time

it reaches us, it has been bled of even the vigor of that misintention. In the performance we get no inkling of process, of the price that has been paid, and it is a kind of insult, for we, the audience, know that we are still involved in paying it.

And yet we have seen elsewhere, more often in the movies than in the theatre, an uncondescending approach to "folk" art, faces seen in closeup, apparently etched in acid, precise.

Even in this production, there is a moment toward the end when the hitherto innocuous musical background becomes for a few measures mordant, satiric, self-mocking (Tevya's son-in-law is being sent to Siberia for revolutionary activities), only to lapse once again into accompaniment for a lipping tableau of fatherly affection, framed within the beams of the (stylized) Succah. With a consistent gesture of surrender, the production chooses the softer, the ingratiating, mode.

And yet, such is the nature of actors, a stage, and a script, (and the actors, under a different kind of direction, could have been eminently competent) that, inadvertently, moments of relation occur. When the play does lurch for an instant into focus, it becomes unerringly the world of Jewish domestic pathos, at its best, the world of Clifford Odets; at its worst, of *The Goldbergs*. Lacking a true mold for their perceptions, the actors have instinctively turned to the one closest to hand. Tevya, surrounded by his wife, daughters, and the unpaid bills, hardens imperceptibly into a tableau of Bronx immigrant family life—the wistful, blustering, charming, ineffectual father, the harried, drab mother, the daughters already tense, already knowledgeable, already "modern" and literary, despite the hours in the millinery shop by day, the bookkeeping courses by night. When Golde presses more potato *latkes* on the coltish suitor, a reality, albeit the wrong one, obtains, and barring the first recoil, one leans forward. (The "benefit" audience, for

whom the shock of recognition apparently stirred no dormant ambivalences, roared.) And when Tevya, bursting with good news and domestic felicity commanded his wife to "hold out the nightgown, Golda," as he showered edibles into her lap, we were back in the third grade, and a shame we acknowledged even then with secret laughter—the sexuality of mama and papa even though they did not speak English very well, and even, God help us, of *Bobbeh* and *Zaydeh*.

Had they stuck by even this reality—the dark secret of the drama of mother and father first in the *shtetl* and later in the Bronx, a life of one bedroom and too many children, the play would have taken on a shape and some part of that lost world might have been found. But this production did not choose to cope with the terrible or the lewd, for they are too alive, and the World of Sholom Aleichem as seen by its professional re-creators to date is pastel, whimsical, good-hearted, dead and buried. It will take a sharper, a more fastidious, imagination to dig it out again.

A False Second Bandung

The following article on the Cairo conference that opened December 26, 1957 appeared in the English edition of the Tokyo Asahi Shimbun, one of Japan's largest dailies.

FOR THE past few weeks, the Communist and the Communist-sympathizing press have been giving considerable space to the scheduled one-week meeting of an "Asian-African Solidarity Conference" in Cairo beginning on December 26.

The promoters make this meeting out to be a second Bandung—a contention that is unacceptable on many counts: for one, there is no governmental participation, and no top leaders from many Asian countries, such as had been fooled into participating

in a conference where the leading role was taken by Chou En-lai and where ties between the Communist and Middle East countries were initiated in a well-nigh euphoric atmosphere.

Communist and crypto-Communist organizations, along with friendly nationalist groups and "observers" who have been invited to camouflage the true color of this meeting, announce they want "to propagate the idea of solidarity among Asian and African countries."

It is obvious that the purpose of this conference is to promote movements supporting definite Soviet policies, especially in the Middle East and Indonesia where active penetration is being pushed—of course under slogans of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism, peaceful coexistence, and the solidarity of peoples fighting for freedom.

The aims of this conference, at which "resolutions" prepared beforehand will be publicized as "the will of Asian-African nations," are evident to those who have noted the preparations going on at the Cairo headquarters, where visiting delegations have stopped by during the last few weeks and made enlightening declarations.

Most typical of these is the joint communique issued by the international confederation of Arab trade unions and the visiting delegation of Indonesian trade unions.

The confederation expressed support for Indonesia's struggle for the liberation of West Irian while the Indonesian delegation expressed the Indonesian workers' support of the struggle for the liberation of the Arab nations and the restoration of Palestine. Both condemned the imperialist conspiracies against Syria and Jordan, and the French massacres in Algeria. They supported the Algerian struggle for independence.

This typifies what will go on at the scheduled propaganda conference, with an indication of the fronts where anti-Western attacks are now being actively whipped up and must be developed to

a greater extent yet. Genuine nationalism and pan-Islamic moves on one side, and Communist interests and ideology on the other, are joining forces for their private aims in horse-trading tactics.

THE CURRENT situation is as follows on these different "fronts":

In Indonesia, the Communist party organizations and trade unions which have registered increased success in several parts of Java in particular (military authorities have restricted them in Sumatra, for instance) are pushing the Government to extreme measures against the Dutch. Jakarta leaders, who have shown no ability to deal with the political, economic and other problems in this rich part of the world and resort to nationalist rabble-rousing in an attempt to cover up their poor showing to date and their lack of control over most of Indonesia, are obviously swamped by the movement they have launched.

It is not likely that respected leaders like ex-Vice-President Hatta (who spent time in Dutch jails but quit over differences with President Sukarno) condone the present policy, which hurts Indonesian interests more than the Dutch. The governor of the Bank of Indonesia, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, protesting against the seizure of a Dutch Bank by trade unions, gave sensible warning: "... it seriously affects money circulation, and irresponsible actions by trade-union workers might endanger Indonesia's economy more than Holland's . . . I am not going to protect Dutch interest here, but let us think and act properly in order not to jeopardize Indonesia's economy . . ."

It is very possible that Sukarno has been encouraged in his moves by the success of Arab nationalism with the Soviets in the Middle East. He is scheduled to visit Egypt's President Nasser at the end of this month in Cairo, at the time of the Asian-African Solidarity conference—if no disaster at home prevents this.

In the Middle East, the Eisenhower doctrine has given a demonstration of its emptiness and of its inefficiency against Soviet penetration. The conflicts are not making headlines at the present time but the situation has definitely worsened.

After its advance in this area during the past year, thanks to State Department policy, Soviet Russia is more than ever the protector of Arab nationalism, whose aims are the unification of Moslems from different countries, suppression of Israel and the control of oil resources in the Middle East, with the control of pipelines as a first step.

Egypt is renewing relations with France and Britain, receives help from the U.S., is negotiating there for funds in connection with the Suez Canal and a parallel pipeline—and receives political and military aid from Soviet Russia with which Abdul Nasser has signed a pact of alliance providing for a great deal of economic help. In Syria—through which pipelines for the West pass—pro-Soviet elements are in power.

One recent item of news from this area has escaped the attention of the foreign press: the passage in the Syrian and Egyptian parliaments of a resolution calling for speedy union of the two countries. Despite official declarations about the desire of both to establish quickly a federation which will be "the core of Arab unity" and meetings between specialized groups from both countries, it is obvious that difficulties are great. In the Arab world feuds are more of a permanent feature than unalterable alliances.

But it is symptomatic of the present climate that Jordan is the enemy of Egypt and Syria, which it separates, since King Hussein has accepted American aid, while the population of this artificial nation, which assuredly will one day be divided between its neighbors, favors Arab ultranationalism.

Comments from Washington have interpreted as a reversal of their previous position the fact that Egypt and Syria, which have a unified military

command to which Jordan used to belong, had taken Jordan's side in her recent frontier quarrel with Israel. This is a false interpretation, as the Arab League will always be ready to support any attack against Israel (considered the outpost of Western imperialism) with Soviet Russia's approval. The suppression of Israel is the Communists' most frequent propaganda, too, among Arab nationalists.

FOR North Africa, whose Tunisian and Moroccan leaders do not accept the aspirations of Nasser to the Caliphate, the Communist and Arab joint policy is to encourage fighting in Algeria, where the rebel leaders have the sympathy of Tunis but depend on Cairo, and to support Moroccan movements demanding the annexation of Mauretania and part of the Sahara with its wealth of oil and other resources. (Morocco had and has nothing in common with these areas, but they would no doubt be exploited with the help of willing foreign interests!)

Outside of these three "fronts," the Cairo Conference will give its overall propaganda to supporting movements in French Black Africa and, of course, with the help of the Japanese crypto-Communist delegation, speak loud and long on peace and disarmament.

Lebanese Jewry in Isolation

THE lack of information about the fate of Jews in Lebanon is largely due to their own policy of isolation from world Jewry. They had adopted and practiced such a policy long before the government had imposed restrictions on them and joined the general anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist chorus of the Arab countries of the Middle East.

Before 1948, there were only some 4,000 Jews in Lebanon, most of them wealthy and of French origin. All of

them lived in Beirut. About a third belonged to the professions and the rest conducted various business enterprises. Their relationship with the majority population, though restrained, was at that time definitely not hostile. The official attitude toward the Jews was far more liberal than that of any other Arab country. Indeed, many of Lebanon's Jews had, if not power, then at least a considerable degree of influence. They were fully-fledged citizens, with the right to vote and to participate in the country's political and cultural life. They had a synagogue, a Jewish kindergarten, a *mikva* and a Maccabi movement for recreation.

From 1936 Lebanon joined the general Arab economic boycott of Jewish Palestine and later of Israel. Although this campaign had no immediate effect on the local Jews, it made them pursue even more closely the policy of isolation from world Jewry and of identity with the Lebanese, whether Christians or Moslems. In this way they hoped to remain inconspicuous and not arouse the envy or wrath of the 1,353,000 Christians and Moslems.

Lebanese law does protect its Jewish subjects to a certain extent. A rather gratifying instance is the unique article in the Constitution which proclaims that "within the territories of Sovereign Lebanon every denominational group which consists of twelve members or more may be regarded as a constituency and may be either directly or indirectly represented in the Parliament, which is to recognize and impose national recognition and observance of any such holiday as the respective constituency may demand on grounds of its religion." This article has been enthusiastically observed.

As a result, all government offices are closed on Fridays because of the Moslems, on Saturdays because of the Jews, and on Sundays because of the Christians; this in addition to observance of all the religious holidays of all the religious groups in the country.

Generally, life in prosperous little

Lebanon is pleasant and, compared with conditions in other Arab countries, quite agreeable. The annual number of tourists passing through Beirut is several times the number of its 350,000 inhabitants. The leading attraction for visitors from the hot deserts are the ski-tracks in the mountains of Lebanon.

Most tourist and catering enterprises including ski-tracks are run by Jews, especially those of the old-timers who constitute the Jewish "upper class" of Lebanon. The "lower class" consists of newcomers from Syria who, after a remarkably short time, took over the major part of Lebanon's goldware trade and allied activities, such as the agencies in the Beirut harbor, one of the major ports of the Middle East. A vital trade artery running through this harbor is the traffic of gold cargos imported into Lebanon from all over the world. In Beirut this gold is melted down, distributed among the goldsmiths, of whom a decisive majority are Syrian Jews, who turn out exotic, oriental jewelry for shipment to the other Arab states.

The influx of Syrian Jews to Lebanon dates back to 1947. Even before that, when the question of an independent Jewish state hit the headlines and turbulence within Syria increased, its Jewish community felt that the more sympathy Zionism was gaining on the international political front the higher rose the tide of anti-Jewish prejudice among the predominantly Moslem population of Syria and the more dangerous became the atmosphere in which they lived. Fearing outbursts similar to the massacre of 1840, the Syrian Jews began to transfer their assets to Lebanon, expecting the worst.

And, indeed, shortly after the outbreak of the Israel War of Independence, the Syrians knew that they were hopelessly beaten. Morale was shattered and the influence of the tottering government's propaganda was zero. As a result, Syrian authorities turned their eyes on the defenseless local Jewish community. By this time, however, most

of the Syrian Jews had managed to escape; some 14,000 Sephardi Jews had crossed the border and found asylum in Lebanon.

Tribute should be paid to Lebanon as the only country in the Middle East willing to open its doors to these Jewish refugees. Its government was well aware of the fact that by granting asylum to the Syrian Jews and offering them Lebanese citizenship it would be straining the already unfriendly relations between Lebanon and Syria. But this consideration was fortunately not decisive.

LATER, however, pressures apparently proved too strong. The new immigrants filled the synagogue and the Maccabi House with such pulsating life and vitality, and the air was so full of plans to build a Jewish day-school and a community center and library, that the Lebanese government, with a military defeat round its neck, finally decided to close down all Jewish institutions (including the Jewish kindergarten) "on grounds of Zionist tendencies."

Dr. Abraham Hellmann, president of the Maccabi group, was arrested and the movement declared illegal. The Maccabi House with all its property was confiscated. Three weeks later Dr. Hellmann was released from prison and permitted to continue his practice as a physician. Rabbi Dr. Kurdagi was summoned to the Beirut police headquarters and advised that for each service conducted in his synagogue he was to obtain a special police license at a cost of five Lebanese pounds, and that persons attending or conducting unlicensed services would be arrested.

A special "defense tax" was imposed on every Jewish person with an earning capacity. Several minor Jewish officials in the Ministry of Commerce were discharged. The newspapers gave prominent play to these incidents, stirring up the Lebanese population against Jews. Some incidents of assault on Jewish persons were reported. One Jewish merchant was stabbed to death.

These events greatly disturbed the local Jews and among those of Syrian origin they even created panic. Many a business folded up. Thousands of Jews left Lebanon in a hurry and settled in France, England and the U.S. But by the time some 8,000 Jews had managed to emigrate, the authorities awoke to the fact that the economy was threatened with severe dislocation. Exit visas to Jews were denied forthwith and some 11,000 Jews thus remain in Beirut.

No "serious" anti-Jewish measures have been taken since. In fact, the government claims that within Lebanon there is no anti-Jewish prejudice at all, and the Jews agree that they suffer only from the "conventional forms of anti-Semitism." Nevertheless, no further building licenses are being granted to Jews. Many schools have expelled Jewish children, although elementary education in Lebanon is compulsory.

One missionary school, where education is free of charge, did admit sixty Jewish boys on condition that, within the school premises, they wear uniform

white shirts with blue stripes as a sign that they are Jews. Their parents, who are poor and cannot afford private tuition, agreed to this humiliating condition.

Of the three universities in Beirut and the Academy of Science only the American University has so far refused to follow the "advice" of the government to expel its eighty Jewish undergraduates. The Academy of science, however, still employs four Jewish lecturers. Eleven Jewish lecturers resigned in protest against the expulsion of Jewish students. One of them, Professor Jacques Dupont, was arrested and nothing is known of his whereabouts. Curiously enough, the Beirut Jewish school of domestic science, owned by Dr. Elias Abarbanell, has been left alone and the two-hundred Jewish girls there continue their training undisturbed.

Of the eleven hospitals in Beirut only the American-owned clinic, "Cedars of Lebanon," admits Jews at any time.

(Reprinted from the Jerusalem Post.)

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life today

Pointing The Way

By

MARTIN BUBER

*Translated and edited by
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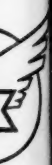


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